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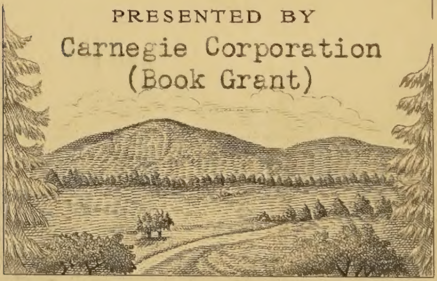

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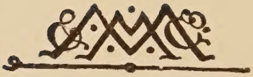

Memoirs of
Sir Walter Scott

BY

J. G. LOCKHART

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JUNE—OCTOBER 1826

THE price received for Woodstock shows what eager competition had been called forth among the booksellers, when, after the lapse of several years, Constable's monopoly of Sir Walter's novels was abolished by their common calamity. The interest excited, not only in Scotland and England, but all over civilized Europe, by the news of Scott's misfortunes, must also have had its influence in quickening this commercial rivalry. The reader need hardly be told that the first meeting of James Ballantyne and Company's creditors witnessed the transformation, a month before darkly prophesied, of the 'Great Unknown' into the 'Too-well-known.' Even for those who had long ceased to entertain any doubt as to the main source at least of the Waverley romances, there would have been something stirring in the first confession of the author; but it in fact included the avowal that he had stood alone in the work of creation; and when the mighty claim came in the same breath with the announcement of personal ruin, the effect on the community of Edinburgh was electrical. It is, in my opinion, not the least striking feature in the foregoing Diary, that it contains no allusion (save the ominous one of 18th December) to this long-withheld revelation. He notes his painful anticipation of returning to the Parliament House—*monstrari digito*—as an insolvent. It does not seem even to have occurred to him, that when he appeared there the morning after his creditors had heard his confession, there could not be many men in the place but must gaze on his familiar features with a mixture of curiosity, admiration, and sympathy, of which a hero in the moment of victory might have been proud—which might have swelled the heart of a martyr as he was bound to the stake. The universal feeling was, I believe, much what the late amiable and accomplished Earl of Dudley expressed to Mr. Morritt when these news reached them at Brighton. 'Scott ruined!' said he—'the author of Waverley ruined! Good God, let every man to whom he has given months of delight give him a sixpence, and he will rise to-morrow morning richer than Rothschild!'

It is no wonder that the book, which it was known he had been writing during this crisis of distress, should have been expected with solicitude. Shall we find him, asked thousands, to have been master truly of his genius in the moment of this ordeal? Shall we trace anything of his own experiences in the construction of his imaginary personages and events?

I know not how others interpreted various passages in Woodstock, but there were not a few that carried deep meaning for such of Scott's own friends as were acquainted with, not his pecuniary misfortune alone, but the drooping health of his wife, and the consolation afforded him by the dutiful devotion of his daughter Anne, in whose character and demeanour a change had occurred exactly similar to that painted in poor Alice Lee:—'A light joyous air, with something of a humorous expression, which seemed to be looking for amusement, had vanished before the touch of affliction, and a calm melancholy supplied its place, which seemed on the watch to administer comfort to others.' In several *mottoes*, and other scraps of verse, the curious reader will find similar traces of the facts and feelings recorded in the author's Diary.

As to the novel itself, though none can pretend to class it in the very highest rank of his works, since we feel throughout the effects of the great fundamental error, likened by a contemporary critic to that of the writer who should lay his scene at Rome immediately after the battle of Philippi, and introduce Brutus as the survivor in that conflict, and Cicero as his companion in victory; yet even this censor is forced to allow that Woodstock displays certain excellences, not exemplified in all the author's fictions, and which attest, more remarkably than any others could have done, the complete self-possession of the mind when composing it. Its great merit, Mr. Senior thinks, is that it combines an extraordinary variety of incident with perfect *unity of action!* For the rest, after condemning, in my view far too broadly, the old Shakspearian Cavalier Sir Henry Lee, he says—

> The Cromwell and Charles II. are inaccurate as portraits, but, as imaginary characters, they are admirable. Charles is perhaps somewhat too stiff, and Cromwell too sentimental; but these impressions never struck us till our office forced us to pervert the work from its proper end, and to read for the purpose of criticism instead of enjoyment. We are not sure, however, that we do not prefer Tomkins to either of them; his cunning, profligacy, hypocrisy, and enthusiasm are combined into a character as spirited as it is original. Wildrake, Rochecliffe, Desborough, Holdenough, and Bletson are composed of fewer materials, and therefore exhibit less power in the author; but they are natural and forcible, particularly Holdenough. There are few subjects which Sir Walter seems more to delight in painting than the meliorating influence of religious feelings on an imperfect temper, even though somewhat alloyed by superstition and enthusiasm.—Woodstock is a picture full of false costume and incorrect design, but splendidly grouped and coloured; and we envy those whose imperfect knowledge of the real events has enabled them to enjoy its beauties without being offended by its inaccuracies.

There is one character of considerable importance which the reviewer does not allude to. If he had happened to have the slightest tincture of his author's fondness for dogs, he would not have failed to say something of the elaborate and affectionate portraiture of old Maida, under the name of Bevis.

The success of this novel was great: large as the price was, its publishers had no reason to repent their bargain; and of course the rapid receipt of such a sum as £8000, the product of hardly three months' labour, highly gratified the body of creditors, whose debtor had devoted to them whatever labour his health should henceforth permit him to perform. We have seen that he very soon began another work of fiction; and it will appear that he from the first designed the 'Chronicles of the Canongate' to be published by Mr. Robert Cadell. That gentleman's connexion with Constable was, from circumstances of which the reader may have traced various little indications, not likely to be renewed after the catastrophe of their old copartnership. They were now endeavouring to establish themselves in separate businesses; and each was, of course, eager to secure the countenance of Sir Walter. He did not hesitate a moment. He conceived that Constable had acted in such a manner by him, especially in urging him to borrow large sums of money for his support after all chance of recovery was over, that he had more than forfeited all claims on his confidence; and Mr. Cadell's frank conduct in warning Ballantyne and him against Constable's last mad proposal about a guarantee for £20,000, had produced a strong impression in his favour.

Sir Walter's Diary has given us some pleasing glimpses of the kind of feeling displayed by Ballantyne towards him, and by him towards Ballantyne, during these dark months. In justice to both, I shall here insert one of the notes addressed by Scott, while Woodstock was at press, to his critical typographer. It has reference to a request that the success of Malachi Malagrowther might be followed up by a set of essays on Irish Absenteeism in the Edinburgh Weekly Journal;—the editorship of which paper, with the *literary* management of the printing-house, had been continued to Mr. Ballantyne, upon a moderate salary, by his creditors' trustees. I may observe, that when the general superintendence of the printing-house came into the hands of regular men of business, it was found (notwithstanding the loss of Constable's great employment) a lucrative one: the creditors, after paying James his salary, cleared in one year £1200 from the concern, which had for many before been a source of nothing but perplexity to its founders. No hints of mutual complaint or recrimination ever dropped from either of the fallen partners. The printer, like Scott, submitted without a murmur of that sort, or indeed of any sort, to his reverses: he withdrew to a very small house in a sequestered suburban situation, and altered all his domestic habits and arrangements with decision and fortitude. Here he received many communications such as the following:—

'*To Mr. James Ballantyne.*

'North St. David Street.

'Dear James—I cannot see to read my manuscript in the way you propose—I would give a thousand pounds I could; but, like the officer of the Customs, when the Board desired him to read a coquet of his own,—I am coquet-*writer*, not coquet-*reader*—and you must be thankful that I can perform even that part of the duty.

'We must in some sort stand or fall *together*; and I do not wish you to think that I am forgetting your interest in my own—though I sincerely believe the former is what you least think of. But I am afraid I must decline the political task you invite me to. It would cost me a fortnight's hard work to do anything to purpose, for I have no information on the subject whatever. In short, as the Earl of Essex said on a certain occasion, "Frankly, it may not be." I hope next winter will afford me an opportunity to do something, which, as Falstaff says, "may do you good."—Ever yours, W. S.'

The date of this note (North St. David Street) reminds me of a passage in Captain Basil Hall's Diary.

He called at Mrs. Brown's lodging-house one morning—and on his return home wrote as follows:—

'A hundred and fifty years hence, when his works have become old classical authorities, it may interest some fervent lover of his writings to know what this great genius was about on Saturday the 10th of June 1826—five months after the total ruin of his pecuniary fortunes, and twenty-six days after the death of his wife.

'In the days of his good luck he used to live at No. 39 in North Castle Street, in a house befitting a rich baronet; but on reaching the door, I found the plate on it covered with rust (so soon is glory obscured), the windows shuttered up, dusty, and comfortless; and from the side of one projected a board, with this inscription, "To Sell"; the stairs were unwashed, and not a foot-mark told of the ancient hospitality which reigned within. In all nations with which I am acquainted, the fashionable world move westward, in imitation, perhaps, of the great tide of civilisation; and, *vice versa*, those persons who decline in fortune, which is mostly equivalent to declining in fashion, shape their course eastward. Accordingly, by an involuntary impulse, I turned my head that way, and enquiring at the clubs in Prince's Street, learned that he now resided in St. David Street, No. 6.

'I was rather glad to recognise my old friend the Abbotsford butler, who answered the door;—the saying about heroes and valets-de-chambre comes to one's recollection on such occasions, and nothing, we may be sure, is more likely to be satisfactory to a man whose fortune is reduced than the stanch adherence of a mere servant, whose wages must be altered for the worse. At the top of the stair we saw a small tray, with a single plate and glasses for one solitary person's dinner. Some few months ago Sir Walter was surrounded by his family, and wherever he moved, his headquarters were the focus of fashion. Travellers from all nations crowded round, and, like the recorded honours of Lord Chatham, "thickened over him." Lady and Miss Scott were his constant companions; the

Lockharts were his neighbours both in town and in Roxburghshire; his eldest son was his frequent guest; and in short, what with his own family and the clouds of tourists, who, like so many hordes of Cossacks, pressed upon him, there was not, perhaps, out of a palace, any man so attended — I had almost said overpowered, by company. His wife is now dead — his son-in-law and favourite daughter gone to London—and his grandchild, I fear, just staggering, poor little fellow, on the edge of the grave, which, perhaps, is the securest refuge for him —his eldest son is married, and at a distance, and report speaks of no probability of the title descending; in short, all are dispersed, and the tourists, those "curiosos impertinentes," drive past Abbotsford gate, and curse their folly in having delayed for a year too late their long-projected jaunt to the north. Meanwhile, not to mince the matter, the great man had, somehow or other, managed to involve himself with printers, publishers, bankers, gas-makers, wool-staplers, and all the fraternity of speculators, accommodation-bill manufacturers, land-jobbers, and so on, till, at a season of distrust in money matters, the hour of reckoning came, like a thief in the night; and as our friend, like the unthrifty virgins, had no oil in his lamp, all his affairs went to wreck and ruin, and landed him, after the gale was over, in the predicament of Robinson Crusoe, with little more than a shirt to his back. But like that able navigator, he is not cast away upon a barren rock. The tide has ebbed, indeed, and left him on the beach, but the hull of his fortunes is above water still, and it will go hard, indeed, with him if he does not shape a raft that shall bring to shore much of the cargo that an ordinary mind would leave in despair, to be swept away by the next change of the moon. The distinction between man and the rest of the living creation, certainly, is in nothing more remarkable than in the power which he possesses over them, of turning to varied account the means with which the world is stocked. But it has always struck me that there is a far greater distinction between man and man than between many men and most other animals; and it is from a familiarity with the practical operation of this marvellous difference that I venture to predict that our Crusoe will cultivate his own island, and build himself a bark in which, in process of time, he will sail back to his friends and fortune in greater triumph than if he had never been driven amongst the breakers.

'Sir Walter Scott, then, was sitting at a writing-desk covered with papers, and on the top was a pile of bound volumes of the Moniteur,—one, which he was leaning over as my brother and I entered, was open on a chair, and two others were lying on the floor. As he rose to receive us, he closed the volume which he had been extracting from, and came forward to shake hands. He was, of course, in deep mourning, with weepers and the other trappings of woe, but his countenance, though certainly a little woe-begonish, was not cast into any very deep furrows. His tone and manner were as friendly as heretofore, and when he saw that we had no intention of making any attempt at sympathy or moanification, but spoke to him as of old, he gradually contracted the length of his countenance, and allowed the corners of his mouth to curl almost imperceptibly upwards, and a renewed lustre came into his eye, if not exactly indicative of cheerfulness, at all events of well-regulated, patient, Christian resignation. My meaning will be misunderstood if it be imagined from this picture that I suspected any hypocrisy, or an affectation of grief in the first instance. I have no doubt, indeed, that he feels, and most acutely, the bereavements which have come upon him; but we may very fairly suppose that among the many visitors he must have, there may be some who cannot understand that it is proper, decent, or even possible, to hide those finer emotions deep in the heart.—He immediately began conversing in his usual style—the chief topic being Captain Denham (whom I had recently seen in London), and his book of African Travels, which Sir Walter had evidently read with much attention. * * * * After sitting a quarter of an hour, we came away, well pleased to see our friend quite unbroken in spirit—and though bowed down a little by the blast, and here and there a branch the less, as sturdy in the trunk as ever, and very possibly all the better for the discipline—better, I mean, for the public, inasmuch as he has now a vast additional stimulus for exertion—and one which all the world must admit to be thoroughly noble and generous.'

A week before this visit took place, Sir Walter had sufficiently mastered himself to resume his literary tasks; and he thenceforth worked with determined resolution on the Life of Napoleon, interlaying a day or two of the Chronicles of the Canongate, whenever he had got before the press with his historical MS., or felt the want of the only repose he ever cared for—a change of labour. In resuming his own Diary, I shall make extracts rather less largely than before, because many entries merely reflect the life of painful exertion to which he had now submitted himself, without giving us any interesting glimpses either of his feelings or opinions. I hope I have kept enough to satisfy all proper curiosity on these last points.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY—JUNE 1826

'*Edinburgh, June* 4.—I wrote a good task yesterday, and to-day a great one, scarce stirring from the desk. I am not sure that it is right to work so hard; but a man must take himself, as well as other people, when in the humour. I doubt if men of method, who can lay aside or take up the pen just at the hours appointed, will ever be better than poor creatures. Lady Louisa Stuart used to tell me of Mr. Hoole, the translator of Tasso and Ariosto, and in that capacity a noble transmuter of gold into lead, that he was a clerk in the India-House, with long ruffles and a snuff-coloured suit of clothes, who occasionally visited her father, John Earl of Bute. She sometimes conversed with him, and was amused to find that he did exactly so many couplets day by day, neither more nor less; and habit had made it light to him, however heavy it might seem to the reader. Well, but if I lay down the pen, as the pain in my breast hints that I should, what am I to do? If I think, why I shall weep—and that's nonsense; and I have no friend now—none—to relieve my tediousness for half an hour of the gloaming. Let me be grateful—I have good news from Abbotsford.

'*June* 7.—Again a day of hard work—busy at half-past eight. I went to the Dean of Faculty's to a consultation about Constable,[1] and sat with said Dean and Mr. J. S. More and J. Gibson. I find they have as high hope of success as lawyers ought to express; and I think I know how our profession speak when sincere; but I cannot interest myself deeply in it. When I had come home from such a business, I used to carry the news to poor Charlotte, who dressed her face in sadness or mirth as she saw the news affect me; this hangs lightly about me. I had almost forgot the appointment, if J. G. had not sent me a card; I passed a piper in the street as I went to the Dean's, and could not help giving him a shilling to play *Pibroch a Donuil Dhu* for luck's sake:—what a child I am!

'*June* 8.—Bilious and headache this morning. A dog howl'd all night and left me little sleep:—poor cur! I daresay he had his distresses, as I have mine. I was obliged to make Dalgleish shut the windows when he appeared at half-past six, as usual, and did not rise till nine. I have often deserved a headache in my younger days without having one, and Nature is, I suppose, paying off old scores. Ay—but then the want of the affectionate care that used to be ready, with lowered voice and stealthy pace, to smooth the pillow and offer condolence and assistance,—gone—gone—for ever—ever—ever. Well, there is another world, and we'll meet free from the mortal sorrows and frailties which beset us here:—amen, so be it. Let me change the topic with hand and head, and the heart must follow. I finished four pages to-day, headache, laziness and all.

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[1] This alludes to the claim advanced by the creditors of Constable and Co. to the copyright of Woodstock and the Life of Napoleon. The Dean of the Faculty of Advocates was at this time Mr. Cranstoun, now Lord Corehouse.—[1839.]

'*June* 9.—Corrected a stubborn proof this morning. These battles have been the death of many a man—I think they will be mine. Well, but it clears to windward; so we will fag on. Slept well last night. By the way, how intolerably selfish this Journal makes me seem—so much attention to one's naturals and non-naturals? Lord Mackenzie[1] called, and we had much chat about parish business.—The late regulations for preparing cases in the Outer House do not work well. One effect of running causes faster through the Courts below is, that they go by scores to appeal, and Lord Gifford has hitherto decided them with such judgment, and so much rapidity, as to give great satisfaction. The consequence will in time be, that the Scottish Supreme Court will be in effect situated in London. Then down fall, as national objects of respect and veneration, the Scottish Bench, the Scottish Bar, the Scottish Law herself, and—and——"Here is an end of an auld sang."[2] Were I as I have been, I would fight knee-deep in blood ere it came to that. I shall always be proud of Malachi as having headed back the Southron, or helped to do so in one instance at least.

'*June* 11.—Bad dreams. Woke, thinking my old and inseparable friend beside me; and it was only when I was fully awake that I could persuade myself that she was dark, low, and distant, and that my bed was widowed. I believe the phenomena of dreaming are in a great measure occasioned by the *double touch* which takes place when one hand is crossed in sleep upon another. Each gives and receives the impression of touch to and from the other, and this complicated sensation our sleeping fancy ascribes to the agency of another being, when it is in fact produced by our own limbs rolling on each other. Well, here goes —*incumbite remis*.

---

[1] The eldest son of the Man of Feeling.

[2] Speech of Lord Chancellor Seafield on the ratification of the Scotch Union.—See Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xxv. p. 93.

'*June* 12.—Finished volume third of Napoleon. I resumed it on the 1st of June, the earliest period that I could bend my mind to it after my great loss. Since that time I have lived, to be sure, the life of a hermit, except attending the Court five days in the week for about three hours on an average. Except at that time, I have been reading or writing on the subject of Boney, and have finished last night, and sent to printer this morning, the last sheet of fifty-two written since 1st June. It is an awful screed; but grief makes me a housekeeper, and to labour is my only resource.

'*June* 14.—To-day I began with a page and a half before breakfast. This is always the best way. You stand like a child going to be bathed, shivering and shaking till the first pitcherful is flung about your ears, and then are as blythe as a water-wagtail. I am just come home from Court; and now, my friend Nap, have at you with a downright blow! Methinks I would fain make peace with my conscience by doing six pages to-night. Bought a little bit of Gruyere cheese, instead of our dame's choke-dog concern. When did I ever purchase anything for my own eating? But I will say no more of that. And now to the bread-mill——

'*June* 16.—Yesterday safe in the Court till nearly four. I had, of course, only time for my task. I fear I shall have little more to-day, for I have accepted to dine at Hector's. I got, yesterday, a present of two engravings from Sir Henry Raeburn's portrait of me, which (poor fellow!) was the last he ever painted, and certainly not the worst.[1] I had the pleasure to give one to young Davidoff for his uncle, the celebrated Black

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[1] See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 9.

Captain of the campaign of 1812. Curious that he should be interested in getting the resemblance of a person whose mode of attaining some distinction has been very different. But I am sensible, that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition. I have been no sigher in shades—no writer of

> Songs and sonnets and rustical roundelays,
> Framed on fancies, and whistled on reeds.[1]

'*Abbotsford, Saturday, June* 17.—Left Edinburgh today, after Parliament House. My two girls met me at Torsonce, which was a pleasant surprise, and we returned in the sociable all together. Found everything right and well at Abbotsford under the new régime. I again took possession of the family bedroom and my widowed couch. This was a sore trial, but it was necessary not to blink such a resolution. Indeed, I do not like to have it thought that there is any way in which I can be beaten.[2]

'*June* 19.—This morning wrote till half twelve—good day's work—at Canongate Chronicles. Methinks I can make this answer. Then drove to Huntly-Burn, and called at Chiefswood. Walked home. The country crying for rain; yet, on the whole, the weather delicious, dry, and warm, with a fine air of wind. The young woods are rising in a kind of profusion I never saw elsewhere. Let me once clear off these incumbrances, and they shall wave broader and deeper yet.

'*June* 21.—For a party of pleasure, I have attended to business well. Twenty pages of Croftangry, five printed pages each, attest my diligence, and I have had a delightful variation by the company of the two Annes. Regulated my little expenses here.

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[1] Song of *The Hunting of the Hare.*

[2] This entry reminds me of Hannah More's account of Mrs. Garrick's conduct after her husband's funeral. 'She told me,' says Mrs. More, 'that she prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure.'—See Memoirs of Mrs. More, vol. i. p. 135.

'*Edinburgh, June* 22.—Returned to my Patmos. Heard good news from Lockhart. Wife well, and John Hugh better. He mentions poor Southey testifying much interest for me, even to tears. It is odd—am I so hard-hearted a man? I could not have wept for him, though in distress I would have gone any length to serve him. I sometimes think I do not deserve people's good opinion, for certainly my feelings are rather guided by reflection than impulse. But everybody has his own mode of expressing interest, and mine is stoical even in bitterest grief. I hope I am not the worse for wanting the tenderness that I see others possess, and which is so amiable. I think it does not cool my wish to be of use when I can. But the truth is, I am better at enduring or acting, than at consoling. From childhood's earliest hour, my heart rebelled against the influence of external circumstances in myself and others—*non est tanti!* To-day, I was detained in the Court from half-past ten till near four, yet I finished and sent off a packet to Cadell, which will finish one-third of the Chronicles, vol. 1st. Henry Scott came in while I was at dinner, and sat while I ate my beaf-steak. A gourmand would think me much at a loss, coming back to my ploughman's meal of boiled beef and Scotch broth, from the rather *recherché* table at Abbotsford, but I have no philosophy in my carelessness on that score. It is natural, though I am no ascetic, as my father was.

'*June* 23.—I received to-day £10 from Blackwood for the article on The Omen. Time was I would not have taken these small tithes of mint and cummin, but scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings, and I, with many depending on me, must do the best I can with my time; God help me.

'*Blair-Adam, June* 24.—Left Edinburgh yesterday after the Court, and came over here with the Lord Chief Baron and William Clerk, to spend as usual a day or two at the Chief-Commissioner's. His Lordship's family misfortunes and my own make our holiday this year of a more quiet description than usual, and a sensible degree of melancholy hangs on the reunion of our party. It was wise, however, not to omit it; for to slacken your hold on life in any agreeable point of connexion, is the sooner to reduce yourself to the indifference and passive vegetation of old age.

'*June* 25.—Another melting day:—we have lounged away the morning, creeping about the place, sitting a great deal, and walking as little as might be, on account of the heat. Blair-Adam has been successively in possession of three generations of persons attached to and skilled in the art of embellishment, and may be fairly taken as a place where art and taste have done a great deal to improve nature. A long ridge of varied ground sloping to the foot of Benarty, and which originally was of a bare, mossy, boggy character, has been clothed by the son, father, and grandfather; while the undulations and hollows, which seventy or eighty years since must have looked only like wrinkles in the black morasses, being now drained and lined, are skirted with deep woods, particularly of spruce, which thrives wonderfully, and covered with excellent grass. We drove in the droskie, and walked in the evening.

'*June* 26.—Another day of unmitigated heat; thermometer 82°: must be higher in Edinburgh, where I return to-night, when the decline of the sun makes travelling practicable. It will be well for my works to be there—not quite so well for me: there is a difference between the clever nice arrangement of Blair-Adam and Mrs. Brown's accommodations, though he who is insured against worse has no right to complain of them. But the studious neatness of poor Charlotte has perhaps made me fastidious. She loved to see things clean, even to Oriental scrupulosity. So oddly do our deep recollections of other kinds correspond with the most petty occurrences of our life. Lord Chief Baron told us a story of the ruling passion strong in death. A Mr. * * * *, a Master in Chancery, was on his deathbed—a very wealthy man. Some occasion of great urgency occurred in which it was necessary to make an affidavit, and the attorney, missing one or two other Masters whom he enquired after, ventured to ask if Mr. * * * * would be able to receive the deposition. The proposal seemed to give him momentary strength; his clerk was sent for, and the oath taken in due form. The Master was lifted up in bed, and with difficulty subscribed the paper; as he sank down again, he made a signal to his clerk—"Wallace."—"Sir?"—"Your ear—lower—lower. Have you got the *half-crown?*" He was dead before morning.

'*Edinburgh*, *June* 27.—Returned to Edinburgh late last night, and had a most sweltering night of it. This day also cruel hot. However, I made a task, or nearly so, and read a good deal about the Egyptian expedition. I have also corrected proofs, and prepared for a great start, by filling myself with facts and ideas.

'*June* 29.—I walked out for an hour last night, and made one or two calls—the evening was delightful—

Day her sultry fires had wasted,
  Calm and sweet the moonlight rose;
Even a captive spirit tasted
  Half oblivion of his woes.[1]

I wonder often how Tom Campbell, with so much real genius, has not maintained a greater figure in the public eye than he has done of late. The Magazine seems to have paralyzed him. The author, not only of the Pleasures of Hope, but of Hohenlinden, Lochiel, etc., should have been at the very top of the tree. Somehow he wants audacity, fears the public, and what is worse, fears the shadow of his own reputation. He is a great corrector too, which succeeds as ill in composition as in education. Many a clever boy is flogged into a dunce, and many an original composition corrected into mediocrity. Tom ought to have done a great deal more: his youthful promise was great. John Leyden introduced me to him. They afterwards quarrelled. When I repeated Hohenlinden to Leyden, he said—"Dash it, man, tell the fellow that I hate him;—but, dash him, he has written the finest verses that have been published these fifty years." I did mine errand as faithfully as one of Homer's messengers, and had for answer—"Tell Leyden that I detest him, but I know the value of his critical approbation." This feud was therefore in the way of being taken up. "When Leyden comes back from India," said Tom Campbell, "what cannibals he will have eaten, and what tigers he will have torn to pieces!"

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[1] Campbell's *Turkish Lady*. The poet was then Editor of the New Monthly Magazine, but he soon gave it up.

'Gave a poor poetess £1. Gibson writes me that £2300 is offered for the poor house; it is worth £300 more, but I will not oppose my own opinion and convenience to good and well-meant counsel: so farewell, poor No. 39. What a portion of my life has been spent there! It has sheltered me, from the prime of life to its decline; and now I must bid good-by to it. I have bid good-by to my poor wife, so long its courteous and kind mistress—and I need not care about the empty rooms; yet it gives me a turn. Never mind; all in the day's work.

'*June* 30.—Here is another dreadful warm dry, fit for nobody but the flies. I was detained in Court till four; dreadfully close, and obliged to drink water for refreshment, which formerly I used to scorn, even in the moors, with a burning August sun, the heat of exercise, and a hundred springs gushing around me. Corrected proofs, etc. on my return.

'*Abbotsford*, *July* 2.—I worked a little this morning, then had a long and warm walk. Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, from Chiefswood, the present inhabitants of Lockhart's cottage, dined with us, which made the evening pleasant. He is a fine soldierly-looking man[1]—his wife a sweet good-humoured little woman. Since we were to lose the Lockharts, we could scarce have had more agreeable neighbours.

'*Edinburgh, July* 6.—Returned last night, and suffered, as usual, from the incursions of the black horse. Mr. B—— C—— writes to condole with me. I think our acquaintance scarce warranted this; but it is well meant, and modestly done. I cannot conceive the idea of forcing myself on strangers in distress, and I have half a mind to turn sharp round on some of my consolers.

'*July* 8.—Wrote a good task this morning. I may be mistaken; but I do think the tale of Elspat M'Tavish[2] in my bettermost manner—but J. B. roars for chivalry. He does not quite understand that everything may be overdone in this world, or sufficiently estimate the necessity of novelty. The Highlanders have been off the field now for some time.—Returning from the Court, looked into a fine show of wild beasts, and saw Nero the great lion, whom they had the brutal cruelty to bait with bull-dogs, against whom the noble creature disdained to exert his strength. He was lying like a prince in a large cage, where you might be admitted if you wish. I had a month's mind—but was afraid of the newspapers. I could be afraid of nothing else, for never did a creature seem more gentle and yet majestic. I longed to caress him. Wallace, the other Lion, born in Scotland, seemed much less trustworthy. He handled the dogs as his namesake did the southron.

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[1] Thomas Hamilton, Esq.—the author of Cyril Thornton—Men and Manners of America—Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns, etc. etc.

[2] The Highland Widow.

'*July* 10.—Dined with John Swinton *en famille*. He told me an odd circumstance. Coming from Berwickshire in the mail-coach, he met with a passenger who seemed more like a military man than anything else. They talked on all sorts of subjects, at length on politics. Malachi's letters were mentioned, when the stranger observed they were much more seditious than some expressions for which he had three or four years ago been nearly sent to Botany Bay. And perceiving John Swinton's surprise at this avowal, he added, "I am Kinloch of Kinloch." This gentleman had got engaged in the Radical business (the only real gentleman by the way who did), and harangued the weavers of Dundee with such emphasis, that he would have been tried and sent to Botany Bay, had he not fled abroad. He was outlawed, and only restored to his estates on a composition with Government. It seems to have escaped Mr. Kinloch, that the man who places a lighted coal in the middle of combustibles and upon the floor, acts a little differently from him who places the same quantity of burning fuel in a fire grate.

'*July* 13.—Dined yesterday with Lord Abercromby at a party he gave to Lord Melville and some old friends, who formed the Contemporary Club. Lord M. and I met with considerable feeling on both sides, and all our feuds were forgotten and forgiven; I conclude so at least, because one or two people, whom I know to be sharp observers of the weather-glass on occasion of such squalls, have been earnest with me to meet him at parties—which I am well assured they would not have been (had I been Horace come to life again) were they not sure the breeze was over. For myself, I am happy that our usual state of friendship should be restored, though I could not have *come down proud stomach* to make advances, which is, among friends, always the duty of the richer and more powerful of the two. To-day I leave Mrs. Brown's lodgings. I have done a monstrous sight of work here, notwithstanding the indolence of this last week, which must and shall be amended.

So good-by, Mrs. Brown,
I am going out of town,
Over dale, over down,
Where bugs bite not,
Where lodgers fight not,
Where below you chairmen drink not,
Where beside you gutters stink not;
But all is fresh, and clear, and gay,
And merry lambkins sport and play;
And they toss with rakes uncommonly short hay,
Which looks as if it had been sown only the other day,
And where oats are at twenty-five shillings a boll, they say,
But all's one for that, since I must and will away.

'*July* 14, *Abbotsford.*—Anybody would think, from the fal-de-ral conclusion of my journal of yesterday, that I left town in a very gay humour—*cujus contrarium verum est.* But nature has given me a kind of buoyancy—I know not what to call it—that mingled even with my deepest afflictions and most gloomy hours. I have a secret pride—I fancy it will be so most truly termed—which impels me to mix with my distresses strange snatches of mirth "which have no mirth in them."

'*July* 16.—Sleepy, stupid, indolent—finished arranging the books, and after that was totally useless—unless it can be called study that I slumbered for three or four hours over a variorum edition of the Gill's-Hill tragedy.[1] Admirable escape for low spirits—for, not to mention the brutality of so extraordinary a murder, it led John Bull into one of his most uncommon fits of gambols, until at last he became so maudlin as to weep for the pitiless assassin, Thurtell, and treasure up the leaves and twigs of the hedge and shrubs in the fatal garden as valuable relics, nay, thronged the minor theatres to see the roan horse and yellow gig in which his victim was transported from one house to the other. I have not stepped over the threshold to-day, so very stupid have I been.

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[1] The murder of Weare by Thurtell and Co. at Gill's-Hill, in Hertfordshire. Sir Walter collected printed trials with great assiduity, and took care always to have the contemporary ballads and prints bound up with them. He admired particularly this verse of Mr. Hook's broadside—

They cut his throat from ear to ear,
His brains they battered in;
His name was Mr. William Weare,
He dwelt in Lyon's Inn.

'*July* 17.—*Desidiæ tandem valedixi.*—Our time is like our money. When we change a guinea, the shillings escape as things of small account; when we break a day by idleness in the morning, the rest of the hours lose their importance in our eye. I set stoutly about seven this morning to Boney—

And long ere dinner time, I have
  Full eight close pages wrote;
What, Duty, hast thou now to crave?
  Well done, Sir Walter Scott!

'*July* 21.—To Mertoun. Lord and Lady Minto and several other guests were there, besides their own large family. So my lodging was a little room which I had not occupied since I was a bachelor, but often before in my frequent intercourse with this kind and hospitable family. Feeling myself returned to that celibacy which renders many accommodations indifferent which but lately were indispensable, my imagination drew a melancholy contrast between the young man entering the world on fire for fame, and busied in imagining means of coming by it, and the aged widower, *blasé* on the point of literary reputation, deprived of the social comforts of a married state, and looking back to regret instead of looking forward to hope. This brought bad sleep and unpleasing dreams. But if I cannot hope to be what I have been, I will not, if I can help it, suffer vain repining to make me worse than I may be. We left Mertoun after breakfast, and the two Annes and I visited Lady Raeburn at Lessudden. My aunt is now in her ninetieth year—so clean, so nice, so well arranged in every respect, that it makes old age lovely. She talks both of late and former events with perfect possession of her faculties, and has only failed in her limbs. A great deal of kind feeling has survived, in spite of the frost of years. Home to dinner, and worked all the afternoon among the Moniteurs—to little purpose, for my principal acquisition was a headache.

'*July* 24.—At dinner-time to-day came Dr. Jamieson[1] of the Scottish Dictionary—an excellent good man, and full of auld Scottish cracks, which amuse me well enough, but are *caviare* to the young people.

'*July* 26.—This day went to Selkirk, to hold a court. The Doctor chose to go with me. Action and reaction—Scots proverb—"The unrest (*i.e.* pendulum) of a clock gangs aye as far the ae gait as the t'other."

'*July* 27.—Up and at it this morning, and finished four pages. An unpleasant letter from London, as if I might be troubled by some of the creditors there, if I should go up to get materials for Nap. I have no wish to go—none at all. I would even like to put off my visit, so far as John Lockhart and my daughter are concerned, and see them when the meeting could be more pleasant. But then, having an offer to see the correspondence from St. Helena, I can make no doubt that I ought to go. However, if it is to infer any danger to my personal freedom, English wind shall not blow on me. It is monstrous hard to prevent me doing what is certainly the best for all parties.

'*July* 28.—I am wellnigh choked with the sulphurous heat of the weather—and my hand is as nervous as a paralytic's. Read through and corrected Saint Ronan's Well. I am no judge, but I think the language of this piece rather good. Then I must allow the fashionable portraits are not the true thing. I am too much out of the way. The story is horribly contorted and unnatural, and the catastrophe is melancholy, which should always be avoided. No matter; I have corrected it for the press.[1] Walter's account of his various quarters per last despatch. Query, if original:—

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[1] The venerable lexicographer often had lodgings near Abbotsford in the angling season, being still very fond of that sport. [Dr. Jamieson died 12th July 1838, aged eighty-one.]

Loughrin is a blackguard place,
  To Gort I give my curse;
Athlone itself is bad enough,
  But Ballinrobe is worse.
I cannot tell which is the worst,
  They're all so very bad;
But of all towns I ever saw,
  Bad luck to Kinnegad.

'*August* 1.—Yesterday evening I took to arranging old plays, and scrambled through two. One, called Michaelmas Term, full of traits of manners; and another a sort of bouncing tragedy, called the Hector of Germany, or the Palsgrave. The last, worthless in the extreme, is like many of the plays in the beginning of the seventeenth century, written to a good tune. The dramatic poets of that time seem to have possessed as joint-stock a highly poetical and abstract tone of language, so that the worst of them remind you of the very best. The audience must have had a much stronger sense of poetry in those days than in ours, since language was received and applauded at the Fortune or the Red Bull, which could not now be understood by any general audience in Great Britain. Now to work.

'*August* 2.—I finished before dinner five leaves, and I would crow a little about it, but here comes Duty like an old housekeeper to an idle chambermaid. Hear her very words—

'*Duty*. Oh! you crow, do you? Pray, can you deny that your sitting so quiet at work was owing to its raining heavily all the forenoon, and indeed till dinner-time, so that nothing would have stirred out that could help it, save a duck or a goose? I trow, if it had been a fine day, by noon there would have been aching of the head, throbbing, shaking, and so forth, to make an apology for going out.

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[1] This Novel was passing through the press in 8vo, 12mo, and 18mo, to complete collective editions in these sizes.

'*Egomet Ipse.* And whose head ever throbbed to go out when it rained, Mrs. Duty?

'*Duty.* *Answer not to me with a fool-born jest*, as your friend Erskine used to say to you when you escaped from his good advice under the fire of some silly pun. You smoke a cigar after dinner, and I never check you—drink tea, too, which is loss of time; and then, instead of writing me one other page, or correcting those you have written out, you rollock into the woods till you have not a dry thread about you; and here you sit writing down my words in your foolish journal instead of minding my advice.

'*Ego.* Why, Mrs. Duty, I would as gladly be friends with you as Crabbe's tradesman fellow with his conscience;[1] but you should have some consideration with human frailty.

'*Duty.* Reckon not on that. But, however, good-night for the present. I would recommend to you to think no thoughts in which I am not mingled—to read no books in which I have no concern—to write three sheets of botheration all the six days of the week *per diem*, and on the seventh to send them to the printer. Thus advising, I heartily bid you farewell.

'*Ego.* Farewell, madam (*exit* DUTY)——and be d—d to ye for an unreasonable bitch! "The devil must be in this greedy gled!" as the Earl of Angus said to his hawk; "will she never be satisfied?"[2]

'*August* 3.—Wrote half a task in the morning. From eleven till half-past eight in Selkirk taking precognitions about a *row*, and came home famished and tired. Now, Mrs. Duty, do you think there is no other Duty of the family but yourself? Or can the Sheriff-Depute neglect his Duty, that the Author may mind *his?* The thing cannot be;—the people of Selkirk must have justice as well as the people of England books. So the two Duties may go pull caps about it. My conscience is clear.

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[1] See Crabbe's Tale of 'The Struggles of Conscience.'

[2] See Tales of a Grandfather, Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xxiii. p. 72.

'*August* 6.—Wrote to-day a very good day's work. Walked to Chiefswood, and saw old Mrs. Tytler, a friend when life was young. Her husband, Lord Woodhouselee, was a kind, amiable, and accomplished man; and when we lived at Lasswade Cottage, soon after my marriage, we saw a great deal of the family, who were very kind to us as newly entered on the world. How many early stories did the old lady's presence recall! She might almost be my mother; yet there we sat, like two people of another generation, talking of things and people the rest knew nothing of. When a certain period of life is over, the difference of years, even when considerable, becomes of much less consequence.

'*August* 10.—Rose early, and wrote hard till two, when I went with Anne to Minto. I must not let her quite forego the custom of good society. We found the Scotts of Harden, etc., and had a very pleasant party. I like Lady M. particularly, but missed my facetious and lively friend, Lady Anna Maria. It is the fashion of some silly women and silly men to abuse her as a blue-stocking. If to have good sense and good-humour, mixed with a strong power of observing, and an equally strong one of expressing—if of this the result must be *blue*, she shall be as blue as they will. Such cant is the refuge of fools who fear those who can turn them into ridicule: it is a common trick to revenge supposed raillery with good substantial calumny. Slept at Minto.

'*August* 11.—I was up as usual, and wrote about two leaves, meaning to finish my task at home; but found my Sheriff-Substitute here on my return, which took up the evening. But I shall finish the volume in less than a month after beginning it. The same exertion would bring the book out at Martinmas, but December is a better time.

'*August* 14.—Finished Vol. IV. yesterday evening—*Deo gratias*. This morning I was seized with a fit of the clevers, and finished my task by twelve o'clock, and hope to add something in the evening. I was guilty, however, of some waywardness, for I began Vol. V. of Boney instead of carrying on the Canongate as I proposed. The reason, however, was that I might not forget the information I had acquired about the treaty of Amiens.

'*August* 16.—Walter and Jane arrived last night. God be praised for restoring to me my dear children in good health, which has made me happier than anything that has happened these several months. If we had Lockhart and Sophia there would be a meeting of the beings dearest to me in life. Walked to ——, where I find a certain lady on a visit—so youthy, so beautiful, so strong in voice—with sense and learning—above all, so fond of good conversation, that, in compassion to my eyes, ears, and understanding, off I bolted in the middle of a tremendous shower of rain, and rather chose to be wet to the skin than to be bethumped with words at that rate. In the evening we had music from the girls, and the voice of the harp and viol were heard in my halls once more, which have been so long deprived of mirth. It is with a mixed sensation I hear these sounds. I look on my children and am happy ; and yet every now and then a pang shoots across my heart.

'*August* 19.—This morning wrote none excepting extracts, etc., being under the necessity of reading and collating a great deal, which lasted till one o'clock or thereabouts, when Dr. and Mrs. Brewster and their young people came to spend a day of happiness at the Lake. We were met there by Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, and a full party. Since the days of Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia, these days of appointed sport and happiness have seldom answered; but we came off indifferently well. We did not indeed catch much fish; but we lounged about in a delightful day, eat and drank—and the children, who are very fine infantry, were clamorously enjoying themselves. We sounded the loch in two or three different places—the deepest may be sixty feet. I was accustomed to think it much more, but your deepest pools, like your deepest politicians and philosophers, often turn out more shallow than was expected.

'*August* 23, *Bittock's-bridge.*—Set off early with Walter, Charles, and ladies, in the sociable, to make a trip to Drumlanrig. We breakfasted at Mr. Boyd's, Broadmeadows, and were received with Yarrow hospitality. From thence climbed the Yarrow, and skirted Saint Mary's Lake, and ascended the Birkhill path, under the moist and misty influence of the *genius loci.* Never mind—my companions were merry and I cheerful. When old people can be with the young without fatiguing them or themselves, their tempers derive the same benefits which some fantastic physicians of old supposed accrued to their constitutions from the breath of the young and healthy. You have not—cannot again have their gaiety or pleasure in seeing sights; but still it reflects itself upon you, and you are cheered and comforted. Our luncheon eaten in the herd's cottage;—but the poor woman saddened me unawares, by asking for poor Charlotte, whom she had often seen there with me. She put me in mind that I had come twice over those hills and bogs with a wheel-carriage, before the road, now an excellent one, was made. I knew it was true; but, on my soul, looking where we must have gone, I could hardly believe I had been such a fool. For riding, pass if you will; but to put one's neck in such a venture with a wheel-carriage was too silly.

'*Drumlanrig*, *August* 24.—What visions does not this magnificent old house bring back to me! The exterior is much improved since I first knew it. It was then in the state of dilapidation to which it had been abandoned by the celebrated old Q——, and was indeed scarce wind and water tight. Then the whole wood had been felled, and the outraged castle stood in the midst of waste and desolation, excepting a few scattered old stumps, not judged worth the cutting. Now, the whole has been, ten or twelve years since, completely replanted, and the scattered seniors look as graceful as fathers surrounded by their children. The face of this immense estate has been scarcely less wonderfully changed. The scrambling tenants, who held a precarious tenure of lease under the Duke of Queensberry, at the risk (as actually took place) of losing their possession at his death, have given room to skilful men, working their farms regularly, and enjoying comfortable houses, at a rent which is enough to forbid idleness, but not to overpower industry.

'*August* 25.—The Duke has grown up into a graceful and apparently strong young man, and received us most kindly. I think he will be well qualified to sustain his difficult and important task. The heart is excellent, so are the talents,—good sense and knowledge of the world, picked up at one of the great English schools (and it is one of their most important results), will prevent him from being deceived; and with perfect good-nature, he has a natural sense of his own situation, which will keep him from associating with unworthy companions. God bless him!—his father and I loved each other well, and his beautiful mother had as much of the angel as is permitted to walk this earth. I see the balcony from which they welcomed poor Charlotte and me, long ere the ascent was surmounted, streaming out their white handkerchiefs from the battlements. There were *four* merry people that day—now one sad individual is all that remains. *Singula prædantur anni.* I had a long walk to-day through the new plantations, the Duchess's Walk by the Nith, etc. (formed by Prior's "Kitty young and gay"); fell in with the ladies, but their donkeys outwalked me—a flock of sheep afterwards outwalked me, and I began to think, on my conscience, that a snail put in training might soon outwalk me. I must lay the old salve to the old sore, and be thankful for being able to walk at all. Nothing was written to-day, my writing-desk having been forgot at Parkgate, but Tom Crichton fetched it up to-day, so something more or less may be done to-morrow morning—and now to dress.

'*Bittock's-bridge*, *August* 26.—We took our departure from the friendly halls of Drumlanrig this morning, after breakfast. I trust this young nobleman will be

A hedge about his friends,
A heckle to his foes.[1]

I would have him not quite so soft-natured as his grandfather, whose kindness sometimes mastered his excellent understanding. His father had a temper which better jumped with my humour. Enough of ill-nature to keep your good-nature from being abused, is no bad ingredient in their disposition who have favours to bestow.

'In coming from Parkgate here, I intended to accomplish a purpose which I have for some years entertained, of visiting Lochwood, the ancient seat of the Johnstones, of which King James said, when he visited it, that the man who built it must have been a thief in his heart. It rained heavily, however, which prevented my making this excursion, and indeed I rather overwalked myself yesterday, and have occasion for rest.

So sit down, Robin, and rest thee.

'*Abbotsford*, *August* 27.—To-day we journeyed through the hills and amongst the storms; the weather rather bullying than bad. We viewed the Grey Mare's Tail, and I still feel confident in crawling along the ghastly bank, by which you approach the fall. I will certainly get some road of application to Mr. Hope Johnstone, to pray him to make the place accessible. We got home before half-past four, having travelled forty miles.

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[1] Ballad on *young* Rob Roy's abduction of Jean Key.—Cromek's Collection.

'*Blair-Adam, August* 28.—Set off with Walter and Jane at seven o'clock, and reached this place in the middle of dinner-time. By some of my not unusual blunders, we had come a day before we were expected. Luckily, in this ceremonious generation, there are still houses where such blunders only cause a little raillery, and Blair-Adam is one of them. My excellent friend is in high health and spirits, to which the presence of Sir Frederick adds not a little. His lady is here—a beautiful woman, whose countenance realizes all the poetic dreams of Byron. There is certainly something of full maturity of beauty which seems framed to be adoring and adored; and it is to be found in the full dark eye, luxuriant tresses, and rich complexion of Greece, and not among "the pale unripened beauties of the north." What sort of a mind this exquisite casket may contain, is not so easily known. She is anxious to please, and willing to be pleased, and, with her striking beauty, cannot fail to succeed.

'*August* 29.—Besides Mrs. and Admiral Adam, Mrs. Loch, and Miss Adam, I find here Mr. Impey, son of that Sir Elijah celebrated in Indian history. He has himself been in India, but has, with a great deal of sense and observation, much better address than always falls to the share of the Eastern adventurer. The art of quiet, easy, entertaining conversation is, I think, chiefly known in England. In Scotland we are pedantic, and wrangle, or we run away with the harrows on some topic we chance to be discursive upon. In Ireland they have too much vivacity, and are too desirous to make a show, to preserve the golden mean. They are the Gascons of Britain. George Ellis was the first converser I ever knew; his patience and good-breeding made me often ashamed of myself going off at score upon some favourite topic. Richard Sharp is so celebrated for this peculiar gift as to be generally called *Conversation Sharp*.[1] The worst of this talent is, that it seems to lack sincerity. You never know what are the real sentiments of a good converser, or at least it is very difficult to discover in what extent he entertains them. His politeness is inconsistent with energy. For forming a good converser, good taste and extensive information and accomplishment are the principal requisites, to which must be added an easy and elegant delivery, and a well-toned voice. I think the higher order of genius is not favourable to this talent.

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[1] Mr. Sharp published, in 1834, a very elegant and interesting little volume of 'Letters and Essays in prose and verse.' See Quarterly Review, No. 102.

'Thorough decided downfall of rain. Nothing for it but patience and proof-sheets.

'*August* 30.—The weather scarce permitted us more license than yesterday, yet we went down to Lochore, and Walter and I perambulated the property, and discussed the necessity of a new road from the south-west, also that of planting some willows along the ditches in the low grounds. Returned to Blair-Adam to dinner.

'*Abbotsford, August* 31.—Left Blair at seven in the morning. Transacted business with Cadell and Ballantyne. Arrived here at eight o'clock at night.

'*September* 6.—Walter being to return to Ireland for three weeks, set off to-day, and has taken Charles with him. I fear this is but a wild plan, but the prospect seemed to make them so happy, that I could not find in my heart to say "No." So away they went this morning to be as happy as they can. Youth is a fine carver and gilder. I had a letter from Jem Ballantyne, plague on him! full of remonstrance deep and solemn, upon the carelessness of Buonaparte. The rogue is right, too. But, as to correcting my style, to the

Jemmy jemmy linkum feedle

tune of what is called fine writing, I'll be d—d if I do. Drew £12 in favour of Charles for his Irish jaunt; same time exhorted him to make himself as expensive to Walter, in the way of eating and drinking, as he could.

'*September* 8.—Sir Frederick Adam deeply regrets the present Greek war, as prematurely undertaken before knowledge and rational education had extended themselves sufficiently. The neighbourhood of the Ionian Islands was fast producing civilisation ; and as knowledge is power, it is clear that example and opportunities of education must soon have given them an immense superiority over the Turk. This premature war has thrown all back into a state of barbarism. It was, I cannot doubt, precipitated by the agents of Russia. Sir Frederick spoke most highly of Byron—the soundness of his views, the respect in which he was held—his just ideas of the Grecian cause and character, and the practical and rational wishes he formed for them. Singular that a man whose conduct in his own personal affairs had been anything but practical, should be thus able to stand by the helm of a sinking State ! Sir Frederick thinks he might have done much for them if he had lived. The rantipole friends of liberty, who go about freeing nations with the same success which Don Quixote had in redressing wrongs, have, of course, blundered everything which they touched.—Task bang-up.

'*September* 12.—I begin to fear Nap. will swell to seven volumes. I had a long letter from James B., threatening me with eight ; but that is impossible. The event of his becoming Emperor is the central point of his history. Now I have just attained it, and it is the centre of the third volume. Two volumes and a half may be necessary to complete the whole.—As I slept for a few minutes in my chair, to which I am more addicted than I could wish, I heard, as I thought, my poor wife call me by the familiar name of fondness which she gave me. My recollections on waking were melancholy enough. These be

The airy tongues that syllable men's names.[1]

All, I believe, have some natural desire to consider these unusual impressions as bodements of good or evil to come.

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[1] Milton's Comus, v. 208.

But alas! this is a prejudice of our own conceit. They are the empty echoes of what is past, not the foreboding voice of things to come.

'*September* 13.—Wrote my task in the morning, and thereafter had a letter from that sage Privy-counsellor ——. He proposes to me that I shall propose to the —— of ——, and offers his own right honourable intervention to bring so beautiful a business to bear. I am struck dumb—absolutely mute and speechless—and how to prevent him making me farther a fool is not easy, for he has left me no time to assure him of the absurdity of what he proposes; and if he should ever hint at such a piece of d—d impertinence, what must the lady think of my conceit or of my feelings! I will write to his present quarters, however, that he may, if possible, have warning not to continue this absurdity.[1]

'*September* 14.—I should not have forgotten, among the *memorabilia* of yesterday, that two young Frenchmen made their way to our sublime presence, in guerdon of a laudatory copy of French verses sent up the evening before, by way of "Open Sesamum," I suppose. I have not read them, nor shall I. No man that ever wrote a line despised the *pap* of praise so heartily as I do. There is nothing I scorn more, except those who think the ordinary sort of praise or censure is matter of the least consequence. People have almost always some private view of distinguishing themselves, or of gratifying their animosity—some point, in short, to carry, with which you have no relation—when they take the trouble to praise you. In general, it is their purpose to get the person praised to puff away in return. To me their rank praises

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[1] Lady Scott had not been quite four months dead, and the entry of the preceding day shows how extremely ill-timed was this communication, from a gentleman with whom Sir Walter had never had any intimacy. This was not the only proposition of the kind that reached him during his widowhood. In the present case there was very high rank and an ample fortune.

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no more make amends for their bad poetry, than tainted butter would pass off stale fish.

'*September* 17.—Rather surprised with a letter from Lord Melville, informing me he and Mr. Peel had put me into the Commission for enquiring into the condition of the Colleges in Scotland. I know little on the subject, but I daresay as much as some of the official persons who are inserted of course. The want of efficient men is the reason alleged. I must of course do my best, though I have little hope of being useful, and the time it will occupy is half ruinous to me, to whom time is everything. Besides, I suppose the honour is partly meant as an act of grace for Malachi.

'*Jedburgh, September* 19.—Circuit. Went to poor Mr. Shortreed's, and regretted bitterly the distress of the family, though they endeavoured to bear it bravely, and to make my reception as comfortable and cheerful as possible. My old friend R. S. gave me a ring found in a grave at the Abbey, to be kept in memory of his son. I will certainly preserve it with especial care.[1]

'Many trifles at circuit, chiefly owing to the cheap whisky, as they were almost all riots. One case of an assault on a deaf and dumb woman. She was herself the chief evidence; but being totally without education, and having, from her situation, very imperfect notions of a Deity and a future state, no oath could be administered. Mr. Kinniburgh, teacher of the deaf and dumb, was sworn interpreter, together with another person, her neighbour, who knew the accidental or conventional signs which the poor thing had invented for herself, as Mr. K. was supposed to understand the more general or natural signs common to people in such a situation. He went through the task with much address, and it was wonderful to see them make themselves intelligible to each other by mere pantomime. Still I did not consider such evidence as much to be trusted to on a criminal case. Several previous interviews had been necessary between the interpreter and the witness, and this is very much like getting up a story. Some of the signs, brief in themselves, of which Mr. K. gave long interpretations, put me in mind of Lord Burleigh in The Critic. "Did he mean all this by a shake of the head?" "Yes, if he shook his head as I taught him." The man was found not guilty. Mr. K. told us of a pupil of his whom he restored, as it may be said, to humanity, and who told him that his ideas of another world were that some great person in the skies lighted up the sun in the morning as he saw his mother light a fire, and the stars in the evening as she kindled a lamp. He said the witness had ideas of truth and falsehood, which was, I believe, true; and that she had an idea of punishment in a future state, which I doubt. He confessed she could not give any guess at its duration, whether temporary or eternal. Dined of course with Lord Mackenzie, the Judge.

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[1] Mr. Thomas Shortreed, a young gentleman of elegant taste and attainments, devotedly attached to Sir Walter, and much beloved in return, had recently died.

'*September* 20.—Waked after a restless night, in which I dreamed of poor Tom Shortreed. Breakfasted with the Rev. Dr. Somerville. This venerable gentleman is one of the oldest of the literary brotherhood—I suppose about eighty-seven,[1]—and except a little deafness, quite entire. Living all his life in good society as a gentleman born—and having, besides, professional calls to make among the poor—he must know, of course, much that is curious concerning the momentous changes which have passed under his eyes. He talked of them accordingly, and has written something on the subject, but has scarce the force necessary to seize on the most striking points. The bowl that rolls easiest along the green goes farthest, and has the least clay sticking to it. I have often noticed that a kindly, placid good-humour is the companion of longevity, and, I suspect, frequently the leading cause of it. Quick, keen, sharp observation, with the power of contrast and illustration, disturbs this easy current of thought. My good friend, the venerable Doctor, will not, I think, die of that disease.

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[1] The Rev. Dr. Thomas Somerville, minister of Jedburgh, author of the 'History of Great Britain during the reign of Queen Anne,' and other works, died 14th May 1830, in the 90th year of his age, and 64th of his ministry. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 220.

'*September* 23.—Wrought in the morning, but only at reading and proofs. That cursed battle of Jena is like to cost me more time than it did Buonaparte to gain it. I met Colonel Fergusson about one, to see his dogs run. It is a sport I have loved well ; but now, I know not why, I find it little interesting. To be sure, I used to gallop, and that I cannot now do. We had good sport, however, and killed five hares. I felt excited during the chase, but the feeling was but momentary. My mind was immediately turned to other remembrances, and to pondering upon the change which had taken place in my own feelings. The day was positively heavenly, and the wild hillside, with our little coursing party, was beautiful to look at. Yet I felt like a man come from the dead, looking with indifference on that which interested him while living. We dined at Huntly-Burn. Kind and comfortable as usual.

'*September* 24.—I made a rally to-day, and wrote four pages, or nearly. Never stirred abroad the whole day, but was made happy after dinner by the return of Charles, full of his Irish jaunt, and happy as young men are with the change of scene. To-morrow I must go to Melville Castle. I wonder what I can do or say about these Universities. One thing occurs — the distribution of bursaries only *ex meritis*. That is, I would have the presentations continue in the present patrons, but exact that those presented should be qualified by success in their literary attainments and distinction acquired at school to hold those scholarships. This seems to be following out the idea of the founders, who, doubtless, intended the furthering of good literature. To give education to dull mediocrity is a flinging of the children's bread to dogs—it is sharping a hatchet on a razor-strop, which renders the strop useless, and does no good to the hatchet. Well, something we will do.

'*Melville Castle*, *September* 25.—Found Lord and Lady M. in great distress. Their son Robert is taken ill at a Russian town about 350 miles from Moscow—dangerously ill. The distance increases the extreme distress of the parents, who, however, bore it like themselves. I was glad to spend a day upon the old terms with such old friends, and believe my being with them, even in this moment of painful suspense, as it did not diminish the kindness of my reception, might rather tend to divert them from the cruel subject. Dr. Nicoll, Principal of St. Andrews, dined—a very gentlemanlike sensible man. We spoke of the visitation, of granting degrees, of public examinations, of abolishing the election of professors by the Senatus Academicus (a most pregnant source of jobs), and much beside—but all desultory. I go back to Abbotsford to-morrow morning.

'*Abbotsford*, *September* 29.—A sort of zeal of working has seized me, which I must avail myself of. No dejection of mind, and no tremor of nerves, for which God be humbly thanked. My spirits are neither low nor high—grave, I think, and quiet—a complete twilight of the mind. I wrote five pages, nearly a double task, yet wandered for three hours, axe in hand, superintending the thinning of the home planting. That does good too. I feel it give steadiness to my mind. Women, it is said, go mad much seldomer than men. I fancy, if this be true, it is in some degree owing to the little manual works in which they are constantly employed, which regulate in some degree the current of ideas, as the pendulum regulates the motion of the time-piece. I do not know if this is sense or nonsense; but I am sensible that if I were in solitary confinement, without either the power of taking exercise or employing myself in study, six months would make me a madman or an idiot.

'*October* 3.—I wrote my task as usual;—but, strange to tell, there is a want of paper. I expect some to-day. In the meantime, to avoid all quarrel with Dame Duty, I cut up some other leaves into the usual statutory size. They say of a fowl, that if you draw a chalk line on a table, and lay chick-a-diddle down with his bill upon it, the poor thing will imagine himself opposed by an insurmountable barrier, which he will not attempt to cross. Suchlike are one-half of the obstacles which serve to interrupt our best resolves, and such is my pretended want of paper. It is like Sterne's want of *sous*, when he went to relieve the *Pauvre Honteux*.

'*October* 5.—I was thinking this morning that my time glided away in a singularly monotonous manner,—like one of those dark grey days which neither promise sunshine nor threaten rain—too melancholy for enjoyment, too tranquil for repining. But this day has brought a change which somewhat shakes my philosophy. I find, by a letter from J. Gibson, that I *may* go to London without danger, and if I may, I in a manner *must*, to examine the papers in the Secretary of State's office about Buonaparte when at St. Helena. The opportunity having been offered, must be accepted; and yet I had much rather stay at home. Even the prospect of seeing Sophia and Lockhart must be mingled with pain;—yet this is foolish too. Lady Hamilton[1] writes me that Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian Minister at Paris, is willing to communicate to me some particulars of Buonaparte's early life. Query: might I not go on there? In for a penny, in for a pound. I intend to take Anne with me, and the pleasure will be great to her, who deserves much at my hand.

'*October* 9.—A gracious letter from Messrs. Abud and Son, bill-brokers, etc.; assure my trustees that they will institute no legal proceedings against me for four or five weeks. And so I am permitted to spend my money and my time to improve the means of paying them their debts, for that is the only use of this journey. They are Jews: I suppose the devil baits for Jews with a pork griskin. Were I not to exert myself, I wonder where their money is to come from.

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[1] Now Lady Jane Hamilton Dalrymple—the eldest daughter of the illustrious Admiral Lord Duncan. Her Ladyship's kindness procured several valuable communications to the author of the Life of Buonaparte.

'*October* 10.—I must prepare for going to London, and perhaps to Paris. I have great unwillingness to set out on this journey; I almost think it ominous; but

> They that look to freits, my master dear,
> Their freits will follow them.

I am down-hearted about leaving all my things, after I was quietly settled; it is a kind of disrooting that recalls a thousand painful ideas of former happier journeys. And to be at the mercy of these fellows. God help—but rather God bless—man must help himself.

'*October* 11.—We are ingenious self-tormentors. This journey annoys me more than anything of the kind in my life. My wife's figure seems to stand before me, and her voice is in my ears—"Scott, do not go." It half frightens me. Strange throbbing at my heart, and a disposition to be very sick. It is just the effect of so many feelings which had been lulled asleep by the uniformity of my life, but which awaken on any new subject of agitation. Poor, poor, Charlotte!! I cannot daub it farther. I get incapable of arranging my papers too. I will go out for half an hour. God relieve me!'

CHAPTER LXXII

Journey to London and Paris—Scott's Diary—Rokeby—Burleigh—Imitators of the Waverley Novels—Southey's Peninsular War—Royal Lodge at Windsor—George IV.—Adelphi Theatre—Terry, Crofton Croker, Thomas Pringle, Allan Cunningham, Moore, Rogers, Lawrence, etc.—Calais, Montreuil, etc.—Paris—Pozzo di Borgo, Lord Granville, Marshals Macdonald and Marmont, Gallois, W. R. Spencer, Princess Galitzin, Charles X., Duchess of Angouleme, etc.—Enthusiastic reception in Paris—Dover Cliff—Theodore Hook, Lydia White, Duke of Wellington, Peel, Canning, Croker, etc. etc.—Duke of York—Madame D'Arblay—State of Politics—Oxford—Cheltenham—Abbotsford—Walker Street, Edinburgh.

OCT.—DEC. 1826

ON the 12th of October, Sir Walter left Abbotsford for London, where he had been promised access to the papers in the Government offices; and thence he proceeded to Paris, in the hope of gathering from various eminent persons authentic anecdotes concerning Napoleon. His Diary shows that he was successful in obtaining many valuable materials for the completion of his historical work; and reflects, with sufficient distinctness, the very brilliant reception he, on this occasion, experienced both in London and Paris. The range of his society is strikingly (and unconsciously) exemplified in the record of one day, when we find him breakfasting at the Royal Lodge in Windsor Park, and supping on oysters and porter in 'honest Dan Terry's house, like a squirrel's cage,' above the Adelphi Theatre, in the Strand. There can be no doubt that this expedition was in many ways serviceable to his Life of Napoleon ; and I think as little, that it was chiefly so by renerving his spirits. The deep and respectful sympathy with which his misfortunes, and gallant behaviour under them, had been regarded by all classes of men at home and abroad, was brought home to his perception in a way not to be mistaken. He was cheered and gratified, and returned to Scotland, with renewed hope and courage, for the prosecution of his marvellous course of industry.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY

'*Rokeby Park, October* 13.—We left Carlisle before seven, and, visiting Appleby Castle by the way (a most interesting and curious place), we got to Morritt's about half-past four, where we had as warm a welcome as one of the warmest hearts in the world could give an old friend. It was great pleasure to me to see Morritt happy in the middle of his family circle, undisturbed, as heretofore, by the sickness of any one dear to him. I may note that I found much pleasure in my companion's conversation, as well as in her mode of managing all her little concerns on the road. I am apt to judge of character by good-humour and alacrity in these petty concerns. I think the inconveniences of a journey seem greater to me than formerly ; while, on the other hand, the pleasures it affords are rather less. The ascent of Stainmore seemed duller and longer than usual, and, on the other hand, Bowes, which used to strike me as a distinguished feature, seemed an ill-formed mass of rubbish, a great deal lower in height than I had supposed ; yet I have seen it twenty times at least. On the other hand, what I lose in my own personal feelings I gain in those of my companion, who shows an intelligent curiosity and interest in what she sees. I enjoy, therefore, reflectively, *veluti in speculo*, the sort of pleasure to which I am now less accessible.—Saw in Morritt's possession the original miniature of Milton, by Cooper—a valuable thing indeed. The countenance is handsome and dignified, with a strong expression of genius.[1]

'*Grantham*, *October* 15.—Old England is no changeling. It is long since I travelled this road, having come up to town chiefly by sea of late years. One race of red-nosed innkeepers are gone, and their widows, eldest sons, or head-waiters, exercise hospitality in their room with the same bustle and importance. But other things seem, externally at least, much the same: the land is better ploughed; straight ridges everywhere adopted in place of the old circumflex of twenty years ago. Three horses, however, or even four, are still often seen in a plough yoked one before the other. Ill habits do not go out at once.

'*Biggleswade*, *October* 16.—Visited Burleigh this morning; the first time I ever saw that grand place, where there are so many objects of interest and curiosity. The house is magnificent, in the style of James I.'s reign, and consequently in mixed Gothic. Of paintings I know nothing; so shall attempt to say nothing. But whether to connoisseurs, or to an ignorant admirer like myself, the Salvator Mundi, by Carlo Dolci, must seem worth a king's ransom. Lady Exeter, who was at home, had the goodness or curiosity to wish to see us. She is a beauty after my own heart; a great deal of liveliness in the face; an absence alike of form and of affected ease, and really courteous after a genuine and ladylike fashion.

'25 *Pall Mall*, *October* 17.—Here am I in this capital once more, after an April-weather meeting with my daughter and Lockhart. Too much grief in our first meeting to be joyful; too much pleasure to be distressing; a giddy sensation between the painful and the pleasurable. I will call another subject.

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[1] This precious miniature, executed by Cooper for Milton's favourite daughter, was long in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and bequeathed by him to the poet Mason, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Morritt's father.

'I read with interest, during my journey, Sir John Chiverton[1] and Brambletye House—novels, in what I may surely claim as the style

> Which I was born to introduce—
> Refined it first, and show'd its use.[2]

They are both clever books—one in imitation of the days of chivalry—the other (by Horace Smith, one of the authors of Rejected Addresses) dated in the time of the Civil Wars, and introducing historical characters.

'I believe, were I to publish the Canongate Chronicles without my name (*nom de guerre*, I mean), the event might be a corollary to the fable of the peasant who made the real pig squeak against the imitator, when the sapient audience killed the poor grunter as if inferior to the biped in his own language. The peasant could, indeed, confute the long-eared multitude by showing piggy; but were I to fail as a knight with a white and maiden shield, and then vindicate my claim to attention by putting "By the Author of Waverley" in the title, my good friend *Publicum* would defend itself by stating I had tilted so ill, that my course had not the least resemblance to former doings, when indisputably I bore away the garland. Therefore I am firmly and resolutely determined to tilt under my own cognizance. The hazard, indeed, remains of being beaten. But there is a prejudice (not an undue one neither) in favour of the original patentee; and Joe Manton's name has borne out many a sorry gun-barrel. More of this to-morrow.

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[1] Chiverton was the first publication (anonymous) of Mr. William Harrison Ainsworth, the author of Rookwood and other popular romances.

[2] Swift.

Expense of journey	£41	0	0
Anne, pocket money	5	0	0
Servants on journey	2	0	0
Cash in purse (silver not reckoned)	2	0	0
	£50	0	0

This is like to be an expensive trip; but if I can sell an early copy to a French translator, it should bring me home. Thank God, little Dohnnie Hoo, as he calls himself, is looking well, though the poor dear child is kept always in a prostrate posture.

'*October* 18.—I take up again my remarks on imitators. I am sure I mean the gentlemen no wrong by calling them so, and heartily wish they had followed a better model. But it serves to show me *veluti in speculo* my own errors, or, if you will, those of the *style*. One advantage, I think, I still have over all of them. They may do their fooling with better grace; but I, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, do it more natural. They have to read old books, and consult antiquarian collections, to get their knowledge; I write because I have long since read such works, and possess, thanks to a strong memory, the information which they have to seek for. This leads to a dragging-in historical details by head and shoulders, so that the interest of the main piece is lost in minute descriptions of events which do not affect its progress. Perhaps I have sinned in this way myself; indeed, I am but too conscious of having considered the plot only as what Bayes calls the means of bringing in fine things; so that, in respect to the descriptions, it resembled the string of the showman's box, which he pulls to exhibit in succession, Kings, Queens, the Battle of Waterloo, Buonaparte at St. Helena, Newmarket Races, and White-headed Bob floored by Jemmy from Town. All this I may have done, but I have repented of it; and in my better efforts, while I conducted my story through the agency of historical personages, and by connecting it with historical incidents, I have endeavoured to weave them pretty closely together, and in future I will study this more. Must not let the background eclipse the principal figures—the frame overpower the picture.

'Another thing in my favour is, that my contemporaries steal too openly. Mr. Smith has inserted in Brambletye House, whole pages from De Foe's "Fire and Plague of London."

> Steal! foh! a fico for the phrase—
> Convey, the wise it call!

When I *convey* an incident or so, I am at as much pains to avoid detection as if the offence could be indicted at the Old Bailey. But leaving this, hard pressed as I am by these imitators, who must put the thing out of fashion at last, I consider, like a fox at his shifts, whether there be a way to dodge them—some new device to throw them off, and have a mile or two of free ground while I have legs and wind left to use it. There is one way to give novelty; to depend for success on the interest of a well-contrived story. But, woe's me! that requires thought, consideration—the writing out a regular plan or plot—above all, the adhering to one—which I never can do, for the ideas rise as I write, and bear such a disproportioned extent to that which each occupied at the first concoction, that (cocksnowns!) I shall never be able to take the trouble; and yet to make the world stare, and gain a new march ahead of them all! Well, something we still will do.

> Liberty's in every blow;
> Let us do or die!

Poor Rob Burns! to tack thy fine strains of sublime patriotism! Better Tristram Shandy's vein. Hand me my cap and bells there. So now, I am equipped. I open my raree-show with

> Ma'am, will you walk in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, sir, will you stalk in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, miss, will you pop in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, master, pray hop in, and fal de ral diddle.

Query—How long is it since I heard that strain of dulcet mood, and where or how came I to pick it up? It is not mine, "though by your smiling you seem to say so."[1] Here is a proper morning's work! But I am childish with seeing them all well and happy here; and as I can neither whistle nor sing, I must let the giddy humour run to waste on paper.

'Sallied forth in the morning; bought a hat. Met Sir William Knighton,[2] from whose discourse I guess that Malachi has done me no prejudice in a certain quarter; with more indications of the times, which I need not set down. Sallied again after breakfast, and visited the Piccadilly ladies. Saw also the Duchess of Buckingham, and Lady Charlotte Bury, with a most beautiful little girl. Owen Rees breakfasted, and agreed I should have what the Frenchman has offered for the advantage of translating Napoleon, which will help my expenses to town and down again.

'*October* 19.—I rose at my usual time, but could not write; so read Southey's History of the Peninsular War. It is very good, indeed—honest English principle in every line; but there are many prejudices, and there is a tendency to augment a work already too long, by saying all that can be said of the history of ancient times appertaining to every place mentioned. What care we whether Saragossa be derived from Cæsaria Augusta? Could he have proved it to be Numantium, there would have been a concatenation accordingly.[3]

'Breakfasted at Sam Rogers's with Sir Thomas Lawrence; Luttrel, the great London wit; Richard Sharp, etc. One of them made merry with some part of Rose's Ariosto; proposed that the Italian should be printed on the other side, for the sake of assisting the indolent reader to understand the English; and complained of his using more than once the phrase of a lady having "voided her saddle," which would certainly sound extraordinary at Apothecaries' Hall. Well, well, Rose carries a dirk too. The morning was too dark for Westminster Abbey, which we had projected.

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[1] Hamlet, Act II. Scene 2.

[2] Sir William was Private Secretary to King George IV. Sir Walter made his acquaintance in August 1822, and ever afterwards they corresponded with each other—sometimes very confidentially.

[3] It is amusing to compare this criticism with Sir Walter's own anxiety to identify his daughter-in-law's place, *Lochore*, with the *Urbs Orrea* of the Roman writers. See vol. iv. p. 238.

'I then went to Downing Street, and am put by Mr. Wilmot Horton into the hands of a confidential clerk, Mr. Smith, who promises access to everything. Then saw Croker, who gave me a bundle of documents. Sir George Cockburn promises his despatches and journal. In short, I have ample prospect of materials. Dined with Mrs. Coutts. Tragi-comic distress of my good friend on the marriage of her presumptive heir with a daughter of Lucien Buonaparte.

'*October* 20.—Commanded down to pass a day at Windsor. This is very kind of his Majesty.—At breakfast, Crofton Croker, author of the Irish Fairy Tales—little as a dwarf, keen-eyed as a hawk, and of easy, prepossessing manners—something like Tom Moore. Here were also Terry, Allan Cunningham, Newton, and others. Now I must go to work. Went down to Windsor, or rather to the Lodge in the Forest, which, though ridiculed by connoisseurs, seems to be no bad specimen of a royal retirement, and is delightfully situated. A kind of cottage, too large perhaps for the style, but yet so managed, that in the walks you only see parts of it at once, and these well composed and grouping with the immense trees. His Majesty received me with the same mixture of kindness and courtesy which has always distinguished his conduct towards me. There was no company besides the royal retinue—Lady Conyngham—her daughter—and two or three other ladies. After we left table, there was excellent music by the royal band, who lay ambushed in a green-house adjoining the apartment. The King made me sit beside him, and talk a great deal—*too much* perhaps—for he has the art of raising one's spirits, and making you forget the *retenue* which is prudent everywhere, especially at court. But he converses himself with so much ease and elegance, that you lose thoughts of the prince in admiring the well-bred and accomplished gentleman. He is in many respects the model of a British Monarch — has little inclination to try experiments on government otherwise than through his Ministers—sincerely, I believe, desires the good of his subjects—is kind towards the distressed, and moves and speaks "every inch a king."[1] I am sure such a man is fitter for us than one who would long to head armies, or be perpetually intermeddling with *la grande politique.* A sort of reserve, which creeps on him daily, and prevents his going to places of public resort, is a disadvantage, and prevents his being so generally popular as is earnestly to be desired. This, I think, was much increased by the behaviour of the rabble in the brutal insanity of the Queen's trial, when John Bull, meaning the best in the world, made such a beastly figure.

'*October* 21.—Walked in the morning with Sir William Knighton, and had much confidential chat, not fit to be here set down, in case of accidents. He undertook most kindly to recommend Charles, when he has taken his degree, to be attached to some of the diplomatic missions, which I think is best for the lad, after all. After breakfast, went to Windsor Castle, and examined the improvements going on there under Mr. Wyattville, who appears to possess a great deal of taste and feeling for Gothic architecture. The old apartments, splendid enough in extent and proportion, are paltry in finishing. Instead of being lined with heart of oak, the palace of the British King is hung with paper, painted wainscot colour. There are some fine paintings, and some droll ones: Among the last are those of divers princes of the House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, of which Queen Charlotte was descended. They are ill-coloured, orang-outang-looking figures, with black eyes and hook-noses, in old-fashioned uniforms. Returned to a hasty dinner in Pall-Mall, and then hurried away to see honest Dan Terry's theatre, called the Adelphi, where we saw The Pilot, from an American novel of that name. It is extremely popular, the dramatist having seized on the whole story, and turned the odious and ridiculous parts, assigned by the original author to the British, against the Yankees themselves. There is a quiet effrontery in this, that is of a rare and peculiar character. The Americans were so much displeased, that they attempted a row—which rendered the piece doubly attractive to the seamen at Wapping, who came up and crowded the house night after night, to support the honour of the British flag. After all, one must deprecate whatever keeps up ill-will betwixt America and the mother country; and *we* in particular should avoid awakening painful recollections. Our high situation enables us to contemn petty insults, and to make advances towards cordiality. I was, however, glad to see Dan's theatre as full seemingly as it could hold. The heat was dreadful, and Anne so unwell that she was obliged to be carried into Terry's house, a curious dwelling no larger than a squirrel's cage, which he has contrived to squeeze out of the vacant space of the theatre, and which is accessible by a most complicated combination of staircases and small passages. There we had rare good porter and oysters after the play, and found Anne much better.

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[1] King Lear, Act IV. Scene 6.

'*October* 22.—This morning Mr. Wilmot Horton, Under Secretary of State, breakfasted. He is full of some new plan of relieving the poor's-rates, by encouraging emigration.[1] But John Bull will think this savours of Botany-Bay. The attempt to look the poor's-rates in the face is certainly meritorious. Laboured in writing and marking extracts to be copied, from breakfast to dinner—with the exception of an hour spent in telling Johnnie the history of his namesake, Gilpin. Tom Moore and Sir Thomas Lawrence came in the evening, which made a pleasant *soirée.* Smoke my French—Egad, it is time to air some of my vocabulary. It is, I find, cursedly musty.

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[1] The Right Honourable Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, Bart. (lately Governor of Ceylon) has published various tracts on the important subject here alluded to.—[1839.]

'*October* 23.—Sam Rogers and Moore breakfasted here, and we were very merry fellows. Moore seemed disposed to go to France with us. I foresee I shall be embarrassed with more communications than I can use or trust to, coloured as they must be by the passions of those who make them. Thus I have a statement from the Duchess d'Escars, to which the Buonapartists would, I daresay, give no credit. If Talleyrand, for example, could be communicative, he must have ten thousand reasons for perverting the truth, and yet a person receiving a direct communication from him would be almost barred from disputing it.

Sing, tantarara, rogues all.

'We dined at the Residentiary-house with good Dr. Hughes—Allan Cunningham, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and young Mr. Hughes. Thomas Pringle[1] is returned from the Cape. He might have done well there, could he have scoured his brains of politics, but he must needs publish a Whig journal at the Cape of Good Hope!! He is a worthy creature, but conceited withal—*hinc illæ lachrymæ.* He brought me some antlers and a skin, in addition to others he had sent to Abbotsford four years since.

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[1] Mr. Pringle was a Roxburghshire farmer's son (lame from birth) who, in youth, attracted Sir Walter's notice by his poem called 'Scenes of Teviotdale.' He was for a time Editor of Blackwood's Magazine, but the publisher and he had different politics, quarrelled, and parted. Sir Walter then gave Pringle strong recommendations to the late Lord Charles Somerset, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, in which colony he settled, and for some years throve under the Governor's protection; but the newspaper alluded to in the text ruined his prospects at the Cape—he returned to England—became Secretary to an anti-slavery association—published a charming little volume entitled 'African Sketches,'—and died, I fear in very distressed circumstances, in December 1834. He was a man of amiable feelings and elegant genius.

'*October* 24.—Laboured in the morning. At breakfast, Dr. Holland, and Cohen, whom they now call Palgrave, a mutation of names which confused my recollections. Item, Moore. I worked at the Colonial Office pretty hard. Dined with Mr. Wilmot Horton, and his beautiful wife, the original of the "*She walks in beauty*," etc. of poor Byron.—*N.B.* The conversation is seldom excellent among official people. So many topics are what Otaheitians call *taboo*. We hunted down a pun or two, which were turned out, like the stag at the Epping Hunt, for the pursuit of all and sundry. Came home early, and was in bed by eleven.

'*October* 25.—Kind Mr. Wilson[1] and his wife at breakfast; also Sir Thomas Lawrence. Locker[2] came in afterwards, and made a proposal to me to give up his intended Life of George III. in my favour on cause shown. I declined the proposal, not being of opinion that my genius lies that way, and not relishing hunting in couples. Afterwards went to the Colonial Office, and had Robert Hay's assistance in my enquiries—then to the French Ambassador's for my passports. Picked up Sotheby, who endeavoured to saddle me for a review of his polyglott Virgil. I fear I shall scarce convince him that I know nothing of the Latin lingo. Sir R. H. Inglis, Richard Sharp, and other friends called. We dine at Miss Dumergue's, and spend a part of our soirée at Lydia White's. To-morrow,

For France, for France, for it is more than need.[3]

'*Calais*, *October* 26.—Up at five, and in the packet by six. A fine passage—save at the conclusion, while we lay on and off the harbour of Calais. But the tossing made no impression on my companion or me;

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[1] William Wilson, Esq., of Wandsworth Common, formerly of Wilsontown, in Lanarkshire.

[2] E. H. Locker, Esq., then Secretary, now one of the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital—an old and dear friend of Scott's.

[3] King John, Act I. Scene 1.

we ate and drank like dragoons the whole way, and were able to manage a good supper and best part of a bottle of Chablis, at the classic Dessein's, who received us with much courtesy.

'*October* 27.—Custom-house, etc. detained us till near ten o'clock, so we had time to walk on the Boulevards, and to see the fortifications, which must be very strong, all the country round being flat and marshy. Lost, as all know, by the bloody papist bitch (one must be vernacular when on French ground) Queen Mary, of red-hot memory. I would rather she had burned a score more of bishops. If she had kept it, her sister Bess would sooner have parted with her virginity. Charles I. had no temptation to part with it—it might, indeed, have been shuffled out of our hands during the Civil Wars, but Noll would have as soon let Monsieur draw one of his grinders—then Charles II. would hardly have dared to sell such an old possession, as he did Dunkirk; and after that the French had little chance till the Revolution. Even then, I think, we could have held a place that could be supplied from our own element the sea. *Cui bono?* None, I think, but to plague the rogues.—We dined at Cormont, and being stopped by Mr. Canning having taken up all the post-horses, could only reach Montreuil that night. I should have liked to have seen some more of this place, which is fortified; and as it stands on an elevated and rocky site, must present some fine points. But as we came in late, and left early, I can only bear witness to good treatment, good supper, good *vin de Barsac*, and excellent beds.

'*October* 28.—Breakfasted at Abbeville, and saw a very handsome Gothic church, and reached Grandvilliers at night. The house is but second-rate, though lauded by several English travellers for the moderation of its charges, as was recorded in a book presented to us by the landlady. There is no great patriotism in publishing that a traveller thinks the bills moderate—it serves usually as an intimation to mine host or hostess that John Bull will bear a little more squeezing. I gave my attestation, too, however, for the charges of the good lady resembled those elsewhere; and her anxiety to please was extreme. Folks must be harder-hearted than I am to resist the *empressement*, which may, indeed, be venal, yet has in its expression a touch of cordiality.

'*Paris*, *October* 29.—Breakfasted at Beauvais, and saw its magnificent cathedral—unfinished it has been left, and unfinished it will remain, of course,—the fashion of cathedrals being passed away. But even what exists is inimitable, the choir particularly, and the grand front. Beauvais is called the *Pucelle*, yet, so far as I can see, she wears no stays—I mean, has no fortifications. On we run, however. *Vogue la galère; et voila nous à Paris*, *Hôtel de Windsor* (Rue Rivoli), where we are well lodged. France, so far as I can see, which is very little, has not undergone many changes. The image of war has, indeed, passed away, and we no longer see troops crossing the country in every direction—villages either ruined or hastily fortified—inhabitants sheltered in the woods and caves to escape the rapacity of the soldiers,—all this has passed away. The inns, too, much amended. There is no occasion for that rascally practice of making a bargain —or *combien*-ing your landlady, before you unharness your horses, which formerly was matter of necessity. The general taste of the English seems to regulate the travelling—naturally enough, as the hotels, of which there are two or three in each town, chiefly subsist by them. We did not see one French equipage on the road; the natives seem to travel entirely in the diligence, and doubtless *à bon marché;* the road was thronged with English. But in her great features France is the same as ever. An oppressive air of solitude seems to hover over these rich and extended plains, while we are sensible, that whatever is the nature of the desolation, it cannot be sterility. The towns are small, and have a poor appearance, and more frequently exhibit signs of decayed splendour than of increasing prosperity. The chateau, the abode of the gentleman,—and the villa, the retreat of the thriving *négociant*,—are rarely seen till you come to Beaumont. At this place, which well deserves its name of the fair mount, the prospect improves greatly, and country-seats are seen in abundance; also woods, sometimes deep and extensive, at other times scattered in groves and single trees. Amidst these the oak seldom or never is found; England, lady of the ocean, seems to claim it exclusively as her own. Neither are there any quantity of firs. Poplars in abundance give a formal air to the landscape. The forests chiefly consist of beeches, with some birches, and the roads are bordered by elms cruelly cropped and pollarded and switched. The demand for firewood occasions these mutilations. If I could waft by a wish the thinnings of Abbotsford here, it would make a little fortune of itself. But then to switch and mutilate my trees!—not for a thousand francs. Ay, but sour grapes, quoth the fox.

'*October* 30.—Finding ourselves snugly settled in our Hotel, we determined to remain here at fifteen francs per day. We are in the midst of what can be seen. This morning wet and surly. Sallied, however, by the assistance of a hired coach, and left cards for Count Pozzo di Borgo, Lord Granville, our ambassador, and M. Gallois, author of the History of Venice. Found no one at home, not even the old pirate Galignani, at whose den I ventured to call. Showed my companion the Louvre (which was closed unluckily), the fronts of the palace, with its courts, and all that splendid quarter which the fame of Paris rests upon in security. We can never do the like in Britain. Royal magnificence can only be displayed by despotic power. In England, were the most splendid street or public building to be erected, the matter must be discussed in Parliament, or perhaps some sturdy cobbler holds out, and refuses to part with his stall, and the whole plan is disconcerted. Long may such impediments exist! But then we should conform to circumstances, and assume in our public works a certain sober simplicity of character, which should point out that they were dictated by utility rather than show. The affectation of an expensive style only places us at a disadvantageous contrast with other nations, and our substitution of plaster for freestone resembles the mean ambition which displays Bristol stones in default of diamonds.

'We went in the evening to the Comédie Française; *Rosamonde* the piece. It is the composition of a young man with a promising name—Emile de *Bonnechose*; the story that of Fair Rosamond. There were some good situations, and the actors in the French taste seemed to be admirable, particularly Mademoiselle Bourgoin. It would be absurd to criticise what I only half understood; but the piece was well received, and produced a very strong effect. Two or three ladies were carried out in hysterics; one next to our box was frightfully ill. A Monsieur *à belles moustaches*—the husband, I trust, though it is likely they were *en partie fine*—was extremely and affectionately assiduous. She was well worthy of the trouble, being very pretty indeed; the face beautiful, even amidst the involuntary convulsions. The afterpiece was *Femme Juge et Partie*, with which I was less amused than I had expected, because I found I understood the language less than I did ten or eleven years since. Well, well, I am past the age of mending.

'Some of our friends in London had pretended that at Paris I might stand some chance of being encountered by the same sort of tumultuary reception which I met in Ireland; but for this I see no ground. It is a point on which I am totally indifferent. As a literary man I cannot affect to despise public applause; as a private gentleman, I have always been embarrassed and displeased with popular clamours, even when in my favour. I know very well the breath of which such shouts are composed, and am sensible those who applaud me to-day would be as ready to toss me to-morrow; and I would not have them think that I put such a value on their favour as would make me for an instant fear their displeasure. Now all this disclamation is sincere, and yet it sounds affected. It puts me in mind of an old woman, who, when Carlisle was taken by the Highlanders in 1745, chose to be particularly apprehensive of personal violence, and shut herself up in a closet, in order that she might escape ravishment. But no one came to disturb her solitude, and she began to be sensible that poor Donald was looking out for victuals, or seeking some small plunder, without bestowing a thought on the fair sex; by and by she popped her head out of her place of refuge with the pretty question, "Good folks, can you tell when the ravishing is going to begin?" I am sure I shall neither hide myself to avoid applause, which probably no one will think of conferring, nor have the meanness to do anything which can indicate any desire of ravishment. I have seen, when the late Lord Erskine entered the Edinburgh theatre, papers distributed in the boxes to mendicate a round of applause—the natural reward of a poor player.

'*October* 31.—At breakfast visited by M. Gallois, an elderly Frenchman (always the most agreeable class), full of information, courteous, and communicative. He had seen nearly, and remarked deeply and spoke frankly, though with due caution. He went with us to the Museum, where I think the Hall of Sculpture continues to be a fine thing—that of Pictures but tolerable, when we reflect upon 1815. A number of great French daubs (comparatively), by David and Gerald, cover the walls once occupied by the Italian *chefs-d'œuvre. Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.* We then visited Nôtre Dame and the Palace of Justice. The latter is accounted the oldest building in Paris, being the work of St. Louis. It is, however, in the interior, adapted to the taste of Louis XIV. We drove over the Pont Neuf, and visited the fine quays, which was all we could make out to-day, as I was afraid to fatigue Anne. When we returned home, I found Count Pozzo di Borgo waiting for me, a personable man, inclined to be rather corpulent—handsome features, with all the Corsican fire in his eyes. He was quite kind and communicative. Lord Granville had also called, and sent his Secretary to invite us to dinner to-morrow. In the evening at the Odéon, where we saw Ivanhoe. It was superbly got up, the Norman soldiers wearing pointed helmets and what resembled much hauberks of mail, which looked very well. The number of the attendants, and the skill with which they were moved and grouped on the stage, were well worthy of notice. It was an opera, and, of course, the story sadly mangled, and the dialogue, in great part, nonsense. Yet it was strange to hear anything like the words which I (then in agony of pain with spasms in my stomach) dictated to William Laidlaw at Abbotsford, now recited in a foreign tongue, and for the amusement of a strange people. I little thought to have survived the completing of this novel.

'*November* 1.—I suppose the ravishing is going to begin, for we have had the Dames des Halles, with a bouquet like a maypole, and a speech full of honey and oil, which cost me ten francs; also a small worshipper, who would not leave his name, but came *seulement pour avoir le plaisir*, *la felicité*, etc. etc. All this jargon I answer with corresponding *blarney* of my own, for have I not licked the black stone of that ancient castle? As to French, I speak it as it comes, and like Doeg in Absalom and Achitophel—

dash on through thick and thin,
Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in.

We went this morning with M. Gallois to the Church of St. Geneviève, and thence to the Collège Henri IV., where I saw once more my old friend Chevalier. He was unwell, swathed in a turban of nightcaps and a multiplicity of *robes de chambre*; but he had all the heart and vivacity of former times. I was truly glad to see the kind old man. We were unlucky in our day for sights, this being a high festival—All Souls' Day. We were not allowed to scale the steeple of St. Geneviève, neither could we see the animals at the Jardin des Plantes, who, though they have no souls, it is supposed, and no interest, of course, in the devotions of the day, observe it in strict retreat, like the nuns of Kilkenny. I met, however, one lioness walking at large in the Jardin, and was introduced. This was Madame de Souza, the authoress of some well-known French romances of a very classical character, I am told, for I have never read them. She must have been beautiful, and is still well-looked. She is the mother of the handsome Count de Flahault, and had a very well-looking daughter with her, besides a son or two. She was very agreeable. We are to meet again. The day becoming decidedly rainy, we returned along the Boulevards by the Bridge of Austerlitz, but the weather spoiled the fine show.

'We dined at the Ambassador, Lord Granville's. He inhabits the same splendid house which Lord Castlereagh had in 1815, namely, Numero 30, Rue de Fauxbourg St. Honoré. It once belonged to Pauline Borghese, and, if its walls could speak, they might tell us mighty curious stories. Without their having any tongue, they speak to my feelings "with most miraculous organ."[1] In these halls I had often seen and conversed familiarly with many of the great and powerful, who won the world by their swords, and divided it by their counsel. There I saw very much of poor Lord Castlereagh—a man of sense, presence of mind, and fortitude, which carried him through many an affair of critical moment, when finer talents would have stuck in the mire. He had been, I think, indifferently educated, and his mode of speaking being far from logical or correct, he was sometimes in danger of becoming almost ridiculous, in despite of his lofty presence, which had all the grace of the Seymours, and his determined courage. But then he was always up to the occasion, and upon important matters was an orator to convince, if not to delight his hearers. He is gone, and my friend * * * * * * * * also, whose kindness this town so strongly recalls. It is remarkable they were the only persons of sense and credibility who both attested supernatural appearances on their own evidence, and both died in the same melancholy manner. I shall always tremble when any friend of mine becomes visionary. I have seen in these rooms the Emperor Alexander, Platoff, Schwartzenberg, Old Blucher, Fouché, and many a marshal whose truncheon had guided armies—all now at peace, without subjects, without dominion, and where their past life, perhaps, seems but the recollection of a feverish dream. What a group would this band have made in the gloomy regions described in the Odyssey! But to lesser things. We were most kindly received by Lord and Lady Granville, and met many friends, some of them having been guests at Abbotsford; among these were Lords Ashley and Morpeth—there were also Charles Ellis (Lord Seaford now), *cum plurimis aliis.* Anne saw for the first time an entertainment *à la mode de France*, where the gentlemen left the parlour with the ladies. In diplomatic houses it is a good way of preventing political discussion, which John Bull is always apt to introduce with the second bottle. We left early, and came home at ten, much pleased with Lord and Lady Granville's kindness, though it was to be expected, as our recommendation came from Windsor.

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[1] Hamlet, Act II. Scene 2.

'*November* 2.—Another gloomy day—a pize upon it!—and we have settled to go to St. Cloud, and dine, if possible, with the Drummonds at Auteuil. Besides, I expect poor Spencer[1] to breakfast. There is another thought which depresses me. Well—but let us jot down a little politics, as my book has a pretty firm lock. The

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[1] The late Honourable William Robert Spencer, the best writer of *vers de societé* in our time, and one of the most charming of companions, was exactly Sir Walter's contemporary, and like him first attracted notice by a version of Bürger's Lenore. Like him, too, this remarkable man fell into pecuniary distress in the disastrous year 1825, and he was now an involuntary resident in Paris, where he died in October 1834, *ann. ætat* 65.

Whigs may say what they please, but I think the Bourbons will stand. M. * * * *, no great Royalist, says that the Duke of Orleans lives on the best terms with the reigning family, which is wise on his part, for the golden fruit may ripen and fall of itself, but it would be dangerous to

> Lend the crowd his arm to shake the tree.[1]

The army, which was Buonaparte's strength, is now very much changed by the gradual influence of time, which has removed many, and made invalids of many more. The artisans are neutral, and if the King will govern according to the Charte, and, what is still more, according to the habits of the people, he will sit firm enough, and the constitution will gradually attain more and more reverence as age gives it authority, and distinguishes it from those temporary and ephemeral governments, which seemed only set up to be pulled down. The most dangerous point in the present state of France is that of religion. It is, no doubt, excellent in the Bourbons to desire to make France a religious country; but they begin, I think, at the wrong end. To press the observancy and ritual of religion on those who are not influenced by its doctrines, is planting the growing tree with its head downwards. Rites are sanctified by belief; but belief can never arise out of an enforced observance of ceremonies; it only makes men detest what is imposed on them by compulsion. Then these Jesuits, who constitute emphatically an *imperium in imperio*, labouring first for the benefit of their own order, and next for that of the Roman See—what is it but the introduction into France of a foreign influence, whose interest may often run counter to the general welfare of the kingdom?

'We have enough of ravishment. M. Meurice writes me that he is ready to hang himself that we did not find accommodation at his hotel; and Madame Mirbel came almost on her knees to have permission to take my portrait. I was cruel; but, seeing her weeping ripe, consented she should come to-morrow and work while I wrote.

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[1] Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel—Character of Shaftesbury.

A Russian Princess Galitzin, too, demands to see me, in the heroic vein; "*Elle vouloit traverser les mers pour aller voir* S. W. S.,"[1] etc.—and offers me a rendezvous at my hotel. This is precious tomfoolery; however, it is better than being neglected like a fallen sky-rocket, which seemed like to be my fate last year.

'We went to St. Cloud with my old friend Mr. Drummond, now living at a pretty *maison de campagne* at Auteuil. St. Cloud, besides its unequalled views, is rich in remembrances. I did not fail to visit the *Orangerie*, out of which Boney expelled the Council of Five-Hundred. I thought I saw the scoundrels jumping the windows, with the bayonet at their rumps. What a pity the house was not two stories high! I asked the Swiss some questions on the *locale*, which he answered with becoming caution, saying, however, that "he was not present at the time." There are also new remembrances. A separate garden, laid out as a playground for the royal children, is called Trocadero, from the siege of Cadiz. But the Bourbons should not take military ground—it is firing a pop-gun in answer to a battery of cannon. All within the house is deranged. Every trace of Nap. or his reign totally done away, as if traced in sand over which the tide has passed. Moreau and Pichegru's portraits hang in the royal ante-chamber. The former has a mean physiognomy; the latter has been a strong and stern-looking man. I looked at him, and thought of his death-struggles. In the guard-room were the heroes of La Vendée, Charette with his white bonnet, the two La Roche Jacquelins, l'Escures, in an attitude of prayer, Stofflet, the gamekeeper, with others.

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[1] S. W. S. stands very often in this Diary for *Sir Walter Scott*. This is done in sportive allusion to the following trait of Tom Purdie:—The morning after the news of Scott's baronetcy reached Abbotsford, Tom was not to be found in any of his usual haunts: he remained absent the whole day—and when he returned at night the mystery was thus explained. He and the head shepherd (who, by the by, was also butcher in ordinary), viz. Robert Hogg (a brother of the Bard of Ettrick), had been spending the day on the hill busily employed in prefixing a large S. for Sir to the W. S. which previously appeared on the backs of the sheep. It was afterwards found that honest Tom had taken it upon him to order a mason to carve a similar honourable augmentation on the stones which marked the line of division between his master's moor and that of the Laird of Kippilaw.

'*November* 3.—Sat to Mad. Mirbel—Spencer at breakfast. Went out and had a long interview with Marshal Macdonald, the purport of which I have put down elsewhere. Visited Princess Galitzin, and also Cooper, the American novelist. This man, who has shown so much genius, has a good deal of the manners, or want of manners, peculiar to his countrymen. He proposed to me a mode of publishing in America, by entering the book as the property of a citizen. I will think of this. Every little helps, as the tod says, when, etc. At night, at the Théâtre de Madame, where we saw two petit pieces, *Le Marriage de Raison*, and *Le plus beau jour de Ma Vie*—both excellently played. Afterwards, at Lady Granville's rout, which was as splendid as any I ever saw—and I have seen *beaucoup dans ce genre.* A great number of ladies of the first rank were present, and if honeyed words from pretty lips could surfeit, I had enough of them. One can swallow a great deal of whipped cream, to be sure, and it does not hurt an old stomach.

'*November* 4.—After ten I went with Anne to the Tuileries, where we saw the royal family pass through the Glass Gallery as they went to chapel. We were very much looked at in our turn, and the King, on passing out, did me the honour to say a few civil words, which produced a great sensation. Mad. la Dauphine and Mad. de Berri curtsied, smiled, and looked extremely gracious; and smiles, bows, and curtsies rained on us like odours, from all the courtiers and ladies of the train. We were conducted by an officer of the Royal Gardes du Corps to a convenient place in the chapel, where we had the pleasure of hearing the mass performed with excellent music.

'I had a perfect view of the royal family. The King is the same in age as I knew him in youth at Holyroodhouse,—debonair and courteous in the highest degree. Mad. Dauphine resembles very much the prints of Marie Antoinette, in the profile especially. She is not, however, beautiful, her features being too strong, but they announce a great deal of character, and the Princess whom Buonaparte used to call the *man* of the family. She seemed very attentive to her devotions. The Duchess of Berri seemed less immersed in the ceremony, and yawned once or twice. She is a lively-looking blonde—looks as if she were good-humoured and happy, by no means pretty, and has a cast with her eyes; splendidly adorned with diamonds, however. After this, gave Mad. Mirbel a sitting, where I encountered a general officer, her uncle, who was chef de l'état major to Buonaparte. He was very communicative, and seemed an interesting person, by no means overmuch prepossessed in favour of his late master, whom he judged impartially, though with affection. We came home and dined in quiet, having refused all temptations to go out in the evening; this on Anne's account as well as my own. It is not quite gospel, though Solomon says it—The eye *can* be tired with seeing, whatever he may allege in the contrary. And then there are so many compliments. I wish for a little of the old Scotch causticity. I am something like the bee that sips treacle.

'*November* 5.—I believe I must give up my journal till I leave Paris. The French are literally outrageous in their civilities—bounce in at all hours, and drive one half mad with compliments. I am ungracious not to be so entirely thankful as I ought to this kind and merry people. We breakfasted with Mad. Mirbel, where were the Dukes of Fitz-James and Duras, etc. etc.; goodly company—but all's one for that. I made rather an impatient sitter, wishing to talk much more than was agreeable to Madame. Afterwards we went to the Champs Elysées, where a balloon was let off, and all sorts of frolics performed for the benefit of the *bons gens de Paris*—besides stuffing them with victuals. I wonder how such a civic festival would go off in London or Edinburgh, or especially in Dublin.

To be sure, they would not introduce their shillelahs! But, in the classic taste of the French, there were no such gladiatorial doings. To be sure, they have a natural good-humour and gaiety which inclines them to be pleased with themselves, and everything about them. We dined at the Ambassador's, where was a large party, Lord Morpeth, the Duke of Devonshire, and others—all very kind. Pozzo di Borgo there, and disposed to be communicative. A large soirée. Home at eleven. These hours are early, however.

'*November* 6.—Cooper came to breakfast, but we were *obsedés partout.* Such a number of Frenchmen bounced in successively, and exploded (I mean discharged) their compliments, that I could hardly find an opportunity to speak a word, or entertain Mr. Cooper at all. After this we sat again for our portraits. Mad. Mirbel took care not to have any one to divert my attention, but I contrived to amuse myself with some masons finishing a façade opposite to me, who placed their stones, not like Inigo Jones, but in the most lubberly way in the world, with the help of a large wheel, and the application of strength of hand. John Smith of Darnick, and two of his men, would have done more with a block and pulley than the whole score of them. The French seem far behind in machinery. We are almost eaten up with kindness, but that will have its end. I have had to parry several presents of busts, and so forth. The funny thing was the airs of my little friend. We had a most affectionate parting—wet, wet cheeks on the lady's side. Pebble-hearted, and shed as few tears as Crab of doggish memory.[1]

'Went to Galignani's, where the brothers, after some palaver, offered £105 for the sheets of Napoleon, to be reprinted at Paris in English. I told them I would think of it. I suppose Treuttel and Würtz had apprehended something of this kind, for they write me that they had made a bargain with my publisher (Cadell, I suppose) for the publishing of my book in all sorts of ways. I must look into this.

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[1] See the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act II. Scene 3.

'Dined with Marshal Macdonald[1] and a splendid party; amongst others, Marshal Marmont—middle size, stout made, dark complexion, and looks sensible. The French hate him much for his conduct in 1814, but it is only making him the scapegoat. Also I saw Mons. de Molé, but especially the Marquis de Lauriston, who received me most kindly. He is personally like my cousin Colonel Russell. I learned that his brother, Louis Law,[2] my old friend, was alive, and the father of a large family. I was most kindly treated, and had my vanity much flattered by the men who had acted such important parts talking to me in the most frank manner.

'In the evening to Princess Galitzin, where were a whole covey of Princesses of Russia arrayed in *tartan*, with music and singing to boot. The person in whom I was most interested was Mad. de Boufflers, upwards of eighty, very polite, very pleasant, and with all the acquirements of a French court lady of the time of Mad. Sevigné, or of the correspondent rather of Horace Walpole. Cooper was there, so the Scotch and American lions took the field together.—Home, and settled our affairs to depart.

'*November* 7.—Off at seven—breakfasted at Beauvais, and pushed on to Amiens. This being a forced march, we had bad lodgings, wet wood, uncomfortable supper, damp beds, and an extravagant charge. I was never colder in my life than when I waked with the sheets clinging around me like a shroud.

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[1] The Marshal had visited Scotland in 1825—and the Diarist then saw a good deal of him under the roof of his kinsman, Mr. Macdonald Buchanan.

[2] Lauriston, the ancient seat of the Laws, so famous in French history, is very near Edinburgh, and the estate was in their possession at the time of the Revolution. Two or three cadets of the family were of the first emigration, and one of them (M. Louis Law) was a frequent guest of the poet's father, and afterwards corresponded during many years with himself. I am not sure whether it was M. Louis Law whose French designation so much amused the people of Edinburgh. One brother of the Marquis de Lauriston, however, was styled *Le Chevalier de Mutton-hole*—this being the name of a village on the Scotch property.

'*November* 8.—We started at six in the morning, having no need to be called twice, so heartily was I weary of my comfortless couch. Breakfasted at Abbeville—then pushed on to Boulogne, expecting to find the packet ready to start next morning, and so to have had the advantage of the easterly tide. But, lo ye! the packet was not to sail till next day. So, after shrugging our shoulders—being the solace *à la mode de France*—and recruiting ourselves with a pullet and a bottle of Chablis *à la mode d'Angleterre*, we set off for Calais after supper, and it was betwixt three and four in the morning before we got to Dessein's, when the house was full, or reported to be so. We could only get two wretched brick-paved garrets, as cold and moist as those of Amiens, instead of the comforts which we were received with at our arrival.[1] But I was better prepared. Stripped off the sheets, and lay down in my dressing-gown, and so roughed it out—*tant bien que mal.*

'*November* 9.—At four in the morning we were called—at six we got on board the packet, where I found a sensible and conversible man, a very pleasant circumstance. At Dover Mr. Ward came with the lieutenant-governor of the castle, and wished us to visit that ancient fortress. I regretted much that our time was short, and the weather did not admit of our seeing views, so we could only thank the gentlemen in declining their civility. The castle, partly ruinous, seems to have been very fine. The Cliff, to which Shakspeare gave his immortal name, is, as all the world knows, a great deal lower than his description implies. Our Dover friends, justly jealous of the reputation of their Cliff, impute this diminution of its consequence to its having fallen in repeatedly since the poet's time. I think it more likely that the imagination of Shakspeare, writing perhaps at a period long after he may have seen the rock, had described it such as he conceived it to have been. Besides, Shakspeare was born in a flat country, and Dover Cliff is at least lofty enough to have suggested the exaggerated features to his fancy. At all events, it has maintained its reputation better than the Tarpeian Rock—no man could leap from it and live. Left Dover after a hot luncheon about four o'clock, and reached London at half-past three in the morning. So adieu to *la belle France*, and welcome merry England.

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[1] A room in Dessein's hotel is now inscribed 'Chambre de Walter Scott'—another has long been marked 'Chambre de Sterne.'

'*Pall-Mall, November* 10.—Ere I leave *la belle France*, however, it is fit I should express my gratitude for the unwontedly kind reception which I met with at all hands. It would be an unworthy piece of affectation did I not allow that I have been pleased—highly pleased—to find a species of literature intended only for my own country, has met such an extensive and favourable reception in a foreign land, where there was so much *a priori* to oppose its progress. For my work I think I have done a good deal; but, above all, I have been confirmed strongly in the impressions I had previously formed of the character of Nap., and may attempt to draw him with a firmer hand.

'The succession of new people and unusual incidents has had a favourable effect on my mind, which was becoming rutted like an ill-kept highway. My thoughts have for some time flowed in another and pleasanter channel than through the melancholy course into which my solitary and deprived state had long driven them, and which gave often pain to be endured without complaint, and without sympathy. "For this relief," as Marcellus says in Hamlet, "much thanks."

'To-day I visited the public offices, and prosecuted my researches. Left enquiries for the Duke of York, who has recovered from a most desperate state. His legs had been threatened with mortification; but he was saved by a critical discharge;—also visited the Duke of Wellington, Lord Melville, and others, besides the ladies in Piccadilly. Dined and spent the evening quietly in Pall-Mall.

'*November* 11.—Croker came to breakfast, and we were soon after joined by Theodore Hook, *alias* (*on dit*) John Bull—he has got as fat as the actual monarch of the herd. Lockhart sat still with us, and we had, as Gil Blas says, a delicious morning, spent in abusing our neighbours, at which my three neighbours are no novices any more than I am myself, though (like Puss in Boots, who only caught mice for his amusement) I am only a chamber counsel in matters of scandal. The fact is, I have refrained, as much as human frailty will permit, from all satirical composition. Here is an ample subject for a little black-balling in the case of Joseph Hume, the great accountant, who has managed the Greek loan so egregiously. I do not lack personal provocation (see 13th March last), yet I won't attack him—at present at least—but *qu'il se garde de moi:*

I'm not a king, nor nae sic thing,
  My word it may not stand ;
But Joseph may a buffet bide,
  Come he beneath my brand.

'At dinner we had a little blow-out on Sophia's part. Lord Dudley, Mr. Hay, Under Secretary of State, Sir Thomas Lawrence, etc. *Mistress*, as she now calls herself, Joanna Baillie, and her sister, came in the evening. The whole went off pleasantly.

'*November* 12.—Went to sit to Sir T. L. to finish the picture for his Majesty, which every one says is a very fine one. I think so myself ; and wonder how Sir Thomas has made so much out of an old weather-beaten block. But I believe the hard features of old Dons like myself are more within the compass of the artist's skill than the lovely face and delicate complexion of females. Came home after a heavy shower. I had a long conversation about * * with * * * *—all that was whispered is true—a sign how much better our domestics are acquainted with the private affairs of our neighbours than we are. A dreadful tale of incest and seduction, and nearly of blood also—horrible beyond expression in its complications and events—"And yet the end is not";—and this man was amiable, and seemed the soul of honour—laughed, too, and was the soul of society. It is a mercy our own thoughts are concealed from each other. Oh! if at our social table we could see what passes in each bosom around, we would seek dens and caverns to shun human society! To see the projector trembling for his falling speculations—the voluptuary rueing the event of his debauchery—the miser wearing out his soul for the loss of a guinea,—all—all bent upon vain hopes and vainer regrets,—we should not need to go to the hall of the Caliph Vathek to see men's hearts broiling under their black veils. Lord keep us from all temptation, for we cannot be our own shepherd!

'We dined to-day at Lady Stafford's, at Westhill. Lord S. looks very poorly, but better than I expected. No company, excepting Sam Rogers and Mr. Thomas Grenville, a very amiable and accomplished man whom I knew better about twenty years since. Age has touched him, as it has doubtless affected me. The great lady received us with the most cordial kindness, and expressed herself, I am sure sincerely, desirous to be of service to Sophia.

'*November* 13.—I consider Charles's business as settled by a private intimation which I had to that effect from Sir W. K., so I need negotiate no farther, but wait the event. Breakfasted at home, and somebody with us, but the whirl of visits so great that I have already forgot the party. Lockhart and I dined at an official person's, where there was a little too much of that sort of flippant wit, or rather smartness, which becomes the parochial Joe Miller of boards and offices. You must not be grave, because it might lead to improper discussions; and to laugh without a joke is a hard task. Your professed wags are treasures to this species of company. Gil Blas was right in eschewing the literary society of his friend Fabricio; but nevertheless one or two of the mess could greatly have improved the conversation of his *Commis*. Went to poor Lydia White's, and found her extended on a couch, frightfully swelled, unable to stir, rouged, jesting, and dying. She has a good heart, and is really a clever creature, but unhappily, or rather happily, she has set up the whole staff of her rest in keeping literary society about her. The world has not neglected her. It is not always so bad as it is called. She can always make up her circle, and generally has some people of real talent and distinction. She is wealthy, to be sure, and gives petit dinners, but not in a style to carry the point *à force d'argent.* In her case the world is good-natured, and perhaps it is more frequently so than is generally supposed.

'*November* 14.—We breakfasted at honest Allan Cunningham's—honest Allan—a leal and true Scotsman of the old cast. A man of genius, besides, who only requires the tact of knowing when and where to stop, to attain the universal praise which ought to follow it. I look upon the alteration of "It's hame and it's hame," and "A wet sheet and a flowing sea," as among the best songs going. His prose has often admirable passages; but he is obscure, and overlays his meaning, which will not do nowadays, when he who runs must read.

'Dined at Croker's, at Kensington, with his family, the Speaker,[1] and the facetious Theodore Hook.

'We came away rather early, that Anne and I might visit Mrs. Arbuthnot to meet the Duke of Wellington. In all my life I never saw him better. He has a dozen of campaigns in his body—and tough ones. Anne was delighted with the frank manners of this unequalled pride of British war, and me he received with all his usual kindness. He talked away about Buonaparte, Russia, and France.

'*November* 15.—I went to the Colonial Office, where I laboured hard. Dined with the Duke of Wellington. Anne could not look enough at the *vainqueur du vainqueur*

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[1] The Right Honourable Sir Charles Manners Sutton, now Viscount Canterbury.—[1839.]

de la terre. The party were Mr. and Mrs. Peel and Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot, Vesey Fitzgerald, Banks, and Croker, with Lady Bathurst and Lady Georgina. One gentleman took much of the conversation, and gave us, with unnecessary emphasis, and at superfluous length, his opinion of a late gambling transaction. This spoiled the evening. I am sorry for the occurrence though, for Lord * * * is fetlock deep in it, and it looks like a vile bog. This misfortune, with the foolish incident at * * *, will not be suffered to fall to the ground, but will be used as a counterpoise to the Greek loan. Peel asked me, in private, my opinion of three candidates for the Scotch gown, and I gave it him candidly. We shall see if it has weight.[1] I begin to tire of my gaieties; and the late hours and constant feasting disagree with me. I wish for a sheep's-head and whisky-toddy against all the French cookery and champaign in the world. Well, I suppose I might have been a Judge of Session by this time—attained, in short, the grand goal proposed to the ambition of a Scottish lawyer. It is better, however, as it is, while, at least, I can maintain my literary reputation.

'*November* 16.—Breakfasted with Rogers, with my daughters and Lockhart. R. was exceedingly entertaining, in his dry, quiet, sarcastic manner. At eleven to the Duke of Wellington, who gave me a bundle of remarks on Buonaparte's Russian campaign, written in his carriage during his late mission to St. Petersburg. It is furiously scrawled, and the Russian names hard to distinguish, but it *shall* do me yeoman's service. Thence I passed to the Colonial Office, where I concluded my extracts. Lockhart and I dined with Croker at the Admiralty *au grand couvert.* No less than five Cabinet Ministers were present—Canning, Huskisson, Melville, Peel, and Wellington, with sub-secretaries by the bushel. The cheer was excellent, but the presence of too many men of distinguished rank and power always freezes the conversation. Each lamp shines brightest when placed by itself; when too close, they neutralize each other.[1]

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[1] Sir Walter's early friend Cranstoun was placed on the Scotch Bench, as Lord Corehouse, in 1826.

'*November* 17.—Sir John Malcolm at breakfast. Saw the Duke of York. The change on H.R.H. is most wonderful. From a big, burly, stout man, with a thick and sometimes an inarticulate mode of speaking, he has sunk into a thin-faced, slender-looking old man, who seems diminished in his very size. I could hardly believe I saw the same person, though I was received with his usual kindness. He speaks much more distinctly than formerly; his complexion is clearer; in short, H.R.H. seems, on the whole, more healthy after this crisis than when in the stall-fed state, for such it seemed to be, in which I remember him. God grant it!—his life is of infinite value to the King and country—it is a breakwater behind the throne.

'*November* 18.—Was introduced by Rogers to Mad. D'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of Evelina and Cecilia—an elderly lady, with no remains of personal beauty, but with a simple and gentle manner, a pleasing expression of countenance, and apparently quick feelings. She told me she had wished to see two persons—myself, of course, being one, the other George Canning. This was really a compliment to be pleased with—a nice little handsome pat of butter made up by a "neat-handed Phillis"[2] of a dairymaid, instead of the grease, fit only for cart-wheels, which one is dosed with by the pound.

'Mad. D'Arblay told us that the common story of Dr. Burney, her father, having brought home her own first work, and recommended it to her perusal, was erroneous. Her father was in the secret of Evelina being printed. But the following circumstances may have given rise to the story:—Dr. Burney was at Streatham soon after the publication, where he found Mrs. Thrale recovering from her confinement, low at the moment, and out of spirits. While they were talking together, Johnson, who sat beside in a kind of reverie, suddenly broke out—"You should read this new work, madam—you should read Evelina; every one says it is excellent, and they are right." The delighted father obtained a commission from Mrs. Thrale to purchase his daughter's work, and retired the happiest of men. Mad. D'Arblay said she was wild with joy at this decisive evidence of her literary success, and that she could only give vent to her rapture by dancing and skipping round a mulberry-tree in the garden. She was very young at this time. I trust I shall see this lady again.

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[1] In returning from this dinner Sir Walter said, 'I have seen some of these great men at the same table *for the last time*.'

[2] Milton's L'Allegro.

'Dined at Mr. Peel's with Lord Liverpool, Duke of Wellington, Croker, etc. The conversation very good, Peel taking the lead in his own house, which he will not do elsewhere. . . . Should have been at the play, but sat too long at Peel's. So ends my campaign amongst these magnificoes and "potent seigniors,"[1] with whom I have found, as usual, the warmest acceptation.

'*November* 20.—I ended this morning my sittings to Lawrence, and am heartily sorry there should be another picture of me except that which he has finished. The person is remarkably like, and conveys the idea of the stout blunt carle that cares for few things, and fears nothing. He has represented the author as in the act of composition, yet has effectually discharged all affectation from the manner and attitude. He dined with us at Peel's yesterday, where, by the way, we saw the celebrated Chapeau de Paille, which is not a Chapeau de Paille at all. I also saw this morning the Duke of Wellington and the Duke of York; the former so communicative, that I regretted extremely the length of time,[2] but have agreed on a correspondence with him. *Trop d'honneur pour moi.* The Duke of York seems still mending, and spoke of state affairs as a high Tory. Were his health good, his spirit is as strong as ever. H.R.H. has a devout horror of the Liberals. Having the Duke of Wellington, the Chancellor, and (perhaps) a still greater person on his side, he might make a great fight when they split, as split they will. But Canning, Huskisson, and a mitigated party of Liberaux, will probably beat them. Canning's wit and eloquence are almost invincible. But then the Church, justly alarmed for their property, which is plainly struck at, and the bulk of the landed interest, will scarce brook even a mild infusion of Whiggery into the Administration. Well, time will show.

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[1] Othello.

[2] Sir Walter no doubt means that he regretted not having seen the Duke at an earlier period of his historical labours.

'We visited our friends Peel, Lord Gwydir, Mr. Arbuthnot, etc., and left our tickets of adieu. In no instance, during my former visits to London, did I ever meet with such general attention and respect on all sides.

'Lady Louisa Stuart dined—also Wright and Mr. and Mrs. Christie. Dr. and Mrs. Hughes came in the evening; so ended pleasantly our last night in London.

'*Oxford*, *November* 20.—Left London after a comfortable breakfast, and an adieu to the Lockhart family. If I had had but comfortable hopes of their poor, pale, prostrate child, so clever and so interesting, I should have parted easily on this occasion; but these misgivings overcloud the prospect. We reached Oxford by six o'clock, and found Charles and his friend young Surtees waiting for us, with a good fire in the chimney, and a good dinner ready to be placed on the table. We had struggled through a cold, sulky, drizzly day, which deprived of all charms even the beautiful country near Henley. So we came from cold and darkness into light, and warmth, and society.—*N.B.* We had neither daylight nor moonlight to see the view of Oxford from the Maudlin Bridge, which I used to think one of the most beautiful in the world.

'The expense of travelling has mounted high. I am too old to rough it, and scrub it, nor could I have saved fifty pounds by doing so. I have gained, however, in health and spirits, in a new stock of ideas, new combinations, and new views. My self-consequence is raised, I hope not unduly, by the many flattering circumstances attending my reception in the two capitals, and I feel confident in proportion. In Scotland I shall find time for labour and for economy.

'*Cheltenham, November* 21.—Breakfasted with Charles in his chambers at Brazen-nose, where he had everything very neat. How pleasant it is for a father to sit at his child's board! It is like the aged man reclining under the shadow of the oak which he has planted. My poor plant has some storms to undergo, but were this expedition conducive to no more than his entrance into life under suitable auspices, I should consider the toil and the expense well bestowed. We then sallied out to see the lions. Remembering the ecstatic feelings with which I visited Oxford more than twenty-five years since, I was surprised at the comparative indifference with which I revisited the same scenes. Reginald Heber, then composing his Prize Poem, and imping his wings for a long flight of honourable distinction, is now dead in a foreign land—Hodgson[1] and other able men all entombed. The towers and halls remain, but the voices which fill them are of modern days. Besides, the eye becomes saturated with sights, as the full soul loathes the honeycomb. I admired indeed, but my admiration was void of the enthusiasm which I formerly felt. I remember particularly having felt, while in the Bodleian, like the Persian magician who visited the enchanted library in the bowels of the mountain, and willingly suffered himself to be enclosed in its recesses, while less eager sages retired in alarm. Now I had some base thoughts concerning luncheon, which was most munificently supplied by Surtees, at his rooms in University College, with the aid of the best ale I ever drank in my life, the real wine of Ceres, and worth that of Bacchus.

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[1] Dr. Frodsham Hodgson, the late excellent Master of Brazen-nose College.

Dr. Jenkyns,[1] the vice-chancellor, did me the honour to call, but I saw him not. Before three set out for Cheltenham, a long and uninteresting drive, which we achieved by nine o'clock. My sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Scott, and her daughter, instantly came to the hotel, and seem in excellent health and spirits.

'*November* 22.—Breakfasted and dined with Mrs. Scott, and leaving Cheltenham at seven, pushed on to Worcester to sleep.—*Nov.* 23. Breakfasted at Birmingham and slept at Macclesfield. As we came in between ten and eleven, the people of the inn expressed surprise at our travelling so late, as the general distress of the manufacturers has rendered many of the lower classes desperately outrageous.—*Nov.* 24. Breakfasted at Manchester—pressed on—and by dint of exertion reached Kendal to sleep; thus getting out of the region of the stern, sullen, unwashed artificers, whom you see lounging sulkily along the streets in Lancashire. God's justice is requiting, and will yet farther requite, those who have blown up this country into a state of unsubstantial opulence, at the expense of the health and morals of the lower classes.

'*Abbotsford, November* 26.—Consulting my purse, found my good £60 diminished to Quarter less Ten. In purse, £8. Naturally reflected how much expense has increased since I first travelled. My uncle's servant, during the jaunts we made together while I was a boy, used to have his option of a shilling per diem for board wages, and usually preferred it to having his charges borne. A servant nowadays, to be comfortable on the road, should have 4s. or 4s. 6d. board wages, which before 1790 would have maintained his master. But if this be pitiful, it is still more so to find the alteration in my own temper. When young, on returning from such a trip as I have just had, my mind would have loved to dwell on all I had seen that was rich and rare, or have been placing, perhaps, in order, the various additions with which I had supplied my stock of information—and now, like a stupid boy blundering over an arithmetical question half obliterated on his slate, I go stumbling on upon the audit of pounds, shillings, and pence. Well,—the skirmish has cost me £200. I wished for information—and I have had to pay for it.'——

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[1] Dr. Richard Jenkyns, Master of Balliol College.

On proceeding to Edinburgh to resume his official duties, Sir Walter established himself in a furnished house in Walker Street, it being impossible for him to leave his daughter alone in the country, and the aspect of his affairs being so much ameliorated that he did not think it necessary to carry the young lady to such a place as Mrs. Brown's lodgings. During the six ensuing months, however, he led much the same life of toil and seclusion from company which that of Abbotsford had been during the preceding autumn—very rarely dining abroad, except with one or two intimate friends, *en famille*—still more rarely receiving even a single guest at home ; and, when there was no such interruption, giving his night as well as his morning to the desk.[1]

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[1] Here ended the 6th Volume of the First Edition.

CHAPTER LXXIII

Life of Napoleon, and Chronicles of the Canongate in progress—Reviewals of Mackenzie's Edition of Home, and of Hoffman's Tales—Rheumatic attacks—Theatrical Fund Dinner—Avowal of the sole Authorship of the Waverley Novels—Letter from Goethe—Reply—Deaths of the Duke of York, Mr. Gifford, Sir George Beaumont, etc.—Mr. Canning Minister—Completion of the Life of Buonaparte—Reminiscences of an Amanuensis—Goethe's Remarks on the Work—its pecuniary results.

DEC. 1826—JUNE 1827

DURING the winter of 1826-27, Sir Walter suffered great pain (enough to have disturbed effectually any other man's labours, whether official or literary) from successive attacks of rheumatism, which seems to have been fixed on him by the wet sheets of one of his French inns; and his Diary contains, besides, various indications that his constitution was already shaking under the fatigue to which he had subjected it. Formerly, however great the quantity of work he put through his hands, his evenings were almost always reserved for the light reading of an elbow-chair, or the enjoyment of his family and friends. Now he seemed to grudge every minute that was not spent at the desk. The little that he read of new books, or for mere amusement, was done by snatches in the course of his meals; and to walk, when he could walk at all, to the Parliament House, and back again through the Prince's Street Gardens, was his only exercise and his only relaxation. Every ailment, of whatever sort, ended in aggravating his lameness; and, perhaps, the severest test his philosophy encountered was the feeling of bodily helplessness that from week to week crept upon him. The winter, to make bad worse, was a very cold and stormy one. The growing sluggishness of his blood showed itself in chilblains, not only on the feet but the fingers, and his handwriting becomes more and more cramped and confused. I shall not pain the reader by extracting merely medical entries from his Diary; but the following give characteristic sketches of his temperament and reflections:—

'*December* 16.—Another bad night. I remember I used to think a slight illness was a luxurious thing. My pillow was then softened by the hand of affection, and the little cares put in exercise to soothe the languor or pain, were more flattering and pleasing than the consequences of the illness were disagreeable. It was a new scene to be watched and attended, and I used to think that the *malade imaginaire* gained something by his humour. It is different in the latter stages—the old post-chaise gets more shattered and out of order at every turn; windows will not be pulled up, doors refuse to open, or being open will not shut again—which last is rather my case. There is some new subject of complaint every moment—your sicknesses come thicker and thicker—your comforting and sympathizing friends fewer and fewer—for why should they sorrow for the course of nature? The recollection of youth, health, and uninterrupted powers of activity, neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor strain of comfort. The best is, the long halt will arrive at last, and cure all. This was a day of labour, agreeably varied by a pain which rendered it scarce possible to sit upright. My journal is getting a vile chirurgical aspect. I begin to be afraid of the odd consequences complaints in the *post equitem* are said to produce. I shall tire of my journal. In my better days I had stories to tell; but death has closed the long dark avenue upon loves and friendships, and I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place filled with monuments of those who were once dear to me, with no insincere wish that it may open for me at no distant period, provided such be the will of God. My pains were those of the heart, and had something flattering in their character; if in the head, it was from the blow of a bludgeon gallantly received, and well paid back. I think I shall not live to the usual verge of human existence; I shall never see the threescore and ten, and shall be summed up at a discount. No help for it, and no matter either.

'*December* 18.—Sir Adam Fergusson breakfasted—one of the few old friends left out of the number of my youthful companions. In youth we have many companions, few friends perhaps; in age, companionship is ended, except rarely, and by appointment. Old men, by a kind of instinct, seek younger associates, who listen to their stories, honour their grey hairs while present, and mimic and laugh at them when their backs are turned. At least that was the way in our day, and I warrant our chicks of the present brood crow to the same tune. Of all the friends that I have left here, there is none who has any decided attachment to literature. So either I must talk on that subject to young people—in other words, turn proser—or I must turn tea-table talker and converse with ladies. I am too old and too proud for either character, so I'll live alone and be contented. Lockhart's departure for London was a loss to me in this way.'

He spent a few days at Abbotsford at Christmas, and several weeks during the spring vacation; but the frequent Saturday excursions were now out of the question—if for no other reason, on account of the quantity of books which he must have by him while working at his Napoleon. He says on the 30th of December—'Wrote hard. Last day of an eventful year; much evil—and some good, but especially the courage to endure what Fortune sends without becoming a pipe for her fingers.[1] It is *not* the last day of the year; but to-morrow being Sunday, we hold our festival to-day.—The Fergussons came, and we had the usual appliances of mirth and good cheer. Yet our party, like the chariot-wheels of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, dragged heavily.—It must be allowed that the regular recurrence of annual festivals among the same individuals has, as life advances, something in it that is melancholy. We meet like the survivors of some perilous expedition, wounded and weakened ourselves, and looking through diminished ranks to think of those who are no more. Or they are like the feasts of the Caribs, in which they held that the pale and speechless phantoms of the deceased appeared and mingled with the living. Yet where shall we fly from vain repining?—or why should we give up the comfort of seeing our friends, because they can no longer be to us, or we to them, what we once were to each other?

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[1] Hamlet, Act III. Scene 2.

'*January* 1, 1827.—God make this a happy new year to the King and country, and to all honest men.

'I went to dine as usual at the kind house of Huntly-Burn; but the cloud still had its influence. The effect of grief upon persons who, like myself and Sir Adam, are highly susceptible of humour, has, I think, been finely touched by Wordsworth in the character of the merry village teacher Matthew, whom Jeffrey profanely calls "a half-crazy sentimental person."[1] But, with my friend Jeffrey's pardon, I think he loves to see imagination best when it is bitted and managed, and ridden upon the *grand pas*. He does not make allowance for starts and sallies, and bounds, when Pegasus is beautiful to behold, though sometimes perilous to his rider. Not that I think the amiable bard of Ryedale shows judgment in choosing such subjects as the popular mind cannot sympathize in. It is unwise and unjust to himself. I do not compare myself, in point of imagination, with Wordsworth—far from it; for his is naturally exquisite, and highly cultivated from constant exercise. But I can see as many castles in the clouds as any man, as many genii in the curling smoke of a steam-engine, as perfect a Persepolis in the embers of a sea-coal fire. My life has been spent in such day-dreams. But I cry no roast-meat. There are times a man should remember what Rousseau used to say, *Tais-toi, Jean Jacques, car on ne t'entend pas!*

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[1] See Edinburgh Review, No. xxiii. p. 135.

'Talking of Wordsworth, he told Anne a story, the object of which, as she understood it, was to show that Crabbe had no imagination. Crabbe, Sir George Beaumont, and Wordsworth were sitting together in Murray's room in Albemarle Street. Sir George, after sealing a letter, blew out the candle which had enabled him to do so, and exchanging a look with Wordsworth, began to admire in silence the undulating thread of smoke which slowly arose from the expiring wick, when Crabbe put on the extinguisher. Anne laughed at the instance, and enquired if the taper was wax, and being answered in the negative, seemed to think that there was no call on Mr. Crabbe to sacrifice his sense of smell to their admiration of beautiful and evanescent forms. In two other men I should have said, "Why it is affectations," with Sir Hugh Evans;[1] but Sir George is the man in the world most void of affectation; and then he is an exquisite painter, and no doubt saw where the *incident* would have succeeded in painting. The error is not in you yourself receiving deep impressions from slight hints, but in supposing that precisely the same sort of impression must arise in the mind of men, otherwise of kindred feeling, or that the commonplace folk of the world can derive such inductions at any time or under any circumstances.

'*January* 13.—The Fergussons, with my neighbours Mr. Scrope and Mr. Bainbridge, ate a haunch of venison from Drummond Castle, and seemed happy. We had music and a little dancing, and enjoyed in others the buoyancy of spirit that we no longer possess ourselves. Yet I do not think the young people of this age so gay as we were. There is a turn for persiflage, a fear of ridicule among them, which stifles the honest emotions of gaiety and lightness of spirit; and people, when they give in the least to the expansion of their natural feelings, are always kept under by the fear of becoming ludicrous. To restrain your feelings and check your enthusiasm in the cause even of pleasure, is now a rule among people of fashion, as much as it used to be among philosophers.

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[1] Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Scene 1.

'*Edinburgh, January* 15.—Off we came, and in despite of rheumatism I got through the journey tolerably. Coming through Galashiels, we met the Laird of Torwoodlee, who, on hearing how long I had been confined, asked how I bore it, observing that he had *once* in his life—Torwoodlee must be between sixty and seventy—been confined for five days to the house, and was like to hang himself. I regret God's free air as much as any man, but I could amuse myself were it in the Bastile.

'*February* 19.—Very cold weather. What says Dean Swift?—

> When frost and snow come both together,
> Then sit by the fire and save shoe leather.

I read and wrote at the bitter account of the French retreat from Moscow, in 1812, till the little room and coal fire seemed snug by comparison. I felt cold in its rigour in my childhood and boyhood, but not since. In youth and middle life I was yet less sensible to it than now—but I remember thinking it worse than hunger. Uninterrupted to-day, and did eight leaves.[1]

'*March* 3.—Very severe weather, and home covered with snow. White as a frosted plum-cake, by jingo. No matter; I am not sorry to find I can stand a brush of weather yet. I like to see Arthur's Seat and the stern old Castle with their white watch-cloaks on. But, as Byron said to Moore, d—n it, Tom, don't be poetical. I settled to Boney, and wrote right long and well.

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[1] One page of his MS. answers to from four to five of the close-printed pages of the original edition of his Buonaparte.

'*Abbotsford*, *March* 12.—Away we set, and came safely to Abbotsford amid all the dulness of a great thaw, which has set the rivers a-streaming in full tide. The wind is high, but for my part

> I like this rocking of the battlements.[1]

I was received by old Tom and the dogs with the unsophisticated feelings of good-will. I have been trying to read a new novel which I had heard praised. It is called *Almacks*, and the author has so well succeeded in describing the cold selfish fopperies of the time, that the copy is almost as dull as the original. I think I shall take up my bundle of Sheriff-Court processes instead of Almacks, as the more entertaining avocation of the two.

'*March* 13.—Before breakfast, prepared and forwarded the processes to Selkirk. Had a pleasant walk to the thicket, though my ideas were olla-podrida-ish. I expect this will not be a day of work but of idleness, for my books are not come. Would to God I could make it light, thoughtless idleness, such as I used to have when the silly smart fancies ran in my brain like the bubbles in a glass of champaign—as brilliant to my thinking, as intoxicating, as evanescent. But the wine is somewhat on the lees. Perhaps it was but indifferent cyder after all. Yet I am happy in this place, where everything looks friendly from old Tom to young Nym.[2] After all, he has little to complain of who has left so many things that like him.

'*March* 21.—Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights, though the day was stormy, and faced the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me. He would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground. There is a touch of the old spirit in me yet, that bids me brave the tempest—the spirit that, in spite of manifold infirmities, made me a roaring boy in my youth, a desperate climber, a bold rider, a deep drinker, and a stout player at single-stick, of all which valuable qualities there are now but slender remains. I worked hard when I came in, and finished five pages.

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[1] Zanga, in The Revenge, Act I. Scene 1.

[2] Nimrod—a stag-hound.

'*March* 26.—Despatched packets. Colonel and Captain Fergusson arrived to breakfast. I had previously determined to give myself a day to write letters; and this day will do as well as another. I cannot keep up with the world without shying a letter now and then. It is true, the greatest happiness I could think of would be to be rid of the world entirely. Excepting my own family, I have little pleasure in the world, less business in it, and am heartily careless about all its concerns.

'*April* 24.—Still deep snow—a foot thick in the court-yard, I daresay. Severe welcome for the poor lambs now coming into the world. But what signifies whether they die just now, or a little while after to be united with salad at luncheon time? It signifies a good deal too. There is a period, though a short one, when they dance among the gowans, and seem happy. As for your aged sheep or wether, the sooner they pass to the *Norman* side of the vocabulary, the better. They are like some old dowager ladies and gentlemen of my acquaintance—no one cares about them till they come to be *cut up*, and then we see how the tallow lies on the kidneys and the chine.

'*May* 13.—A most idle and dissipated day. I did not rise till half-past eight o'clock. Col. and Capt. Fergusson came to breakfast. I walked half-way home with them, then turned back and spent the day, which was delightful, wandering from place to place in the woods, sometimes reading the new and interesting volumes of *Cyril Thornton*, sometimes "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies" which alternated in my mind, idly stirred by the succession of a thousand vague thoughts and fears, the gay strangely mingled with those of dismal melancholy ; tears which seemed ready to flow unbidden ; smiles which approached to those of insanity ; all that wild variety of mood which solitude engenders. I scribbled some verses, or rather composed them in my memory. The contrast at leaving Abbotsford to former departures, is of an agitating and violent description. Assorting papers, and so forth. I never could help admiring the concatenation between Ahithophel's setting his house in order and hanging himself.[1] The one seems to follow the other as a matter of course. But what frightens and disgusts me is those fearful letters from those who have been long dead, to those who linger on their wayfare through the valley of tears. Those fine lines of Spencer came into my head—

> The shade of youthful Hope is there,
> That lingered long, and latest died ;
> Ambition all dissolved to air,
> With phantom Honours by his side.
>
> What empty shadows glimmer nigh ?
> They once were Friendship, Truth, and Love !
> Oh die to thought, to memory die,
> Since lifeless to my heart ye prove.[2]

Ay, and can I forget the Author—the frightful moral of his own vision ? What is this world ?—a dream within a dream : as we grow older, each step is an awakening. The youth awakes, as he thinks, from childhood—the full-grown man despises the pursuits of youth as visionary—the old man looks on manhood as a feverish dream. The grave the last sleep ? No ; it is the last and final awakening.

'*Edinburgh*, *May* 15.—It is impossible not to compare this return to Edinburgh with others in more happy times. But we should rather recollect under what distress of mind I took up my lodgings in Mrs. Brown's last summer.—Went to Court and resumed old habits. Heard the true history of ——.[1] Imagination renders us liable to be the victims of occasional low spirits. All belonging to this gifted, as it is called, but often unhappy class, must have felt, that but for the dictates of religion, or the natural recoil of the mind from the idea of dissolution, there have been times when they would have been willing to throw away life as a child does a broken toy. I am sure I know one who has often felt so. O God! what are we?—Lords of nature?—Why, a tile drops from a house-top, which an elephant would not feel more than the fall of a sheet of pasteboard, and there lies his lordship. Or something of inconceivably minute origin—the pressure of a bone, or the inflammation of a particle of the brain—takes place, and the emblem of the Deity destroys himself or some one else. We hold our health and our reason on terms slighter than one would desire, were it in their choice, to hold an Irish cabin.'

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[1] 2nd Sam. xvii. 23.

[2] Poems by the late Honourable W. R. Spencer, London, 1835, p. 45. See *ante*, p. 59.

These are melancholy entries. Most of those from which they have been selected begin with R. for Rheumatism, or R.R. for Rheumatism Redoubled, and then mark the number of leaves sent to James Ballantyne—the proof-sheets corrected for press—or the calculations on which he reluctantly made up his mind to extend the Life of Buonaparte from six to seven, from seven to eight, and finally from eight to nine thick and closely printed volumes.

During the early months of 1827, however, he executed various minor tracts also: for the Quarterly Review, an article on Mackenzie's Life and Works of John Home, author of Douglas, which is, in fact, a rich chapter of Scott's own early reminiscences, and gives many interesting sketches of the literary society of Scotland in the age of which Mackenzie was the last honoured relic;[2] and for the Foreign Review, then newly started under the editorship of Mr. R. P. Gillies, an ingenious and elaborate paper on the writings of the German novelist Hoffman.[1] This article, it is proper to observe, was a benefaction to Mr. Gillies, whose pecuniary affairs rendered such assistance very desirable. Scott's generosity in this matter—for it was exactly giving a poor brother author £100 at the expense of considerable time and drudgery to himself—I think it necessary to mention; the date of the exertion requires it of me. But such, in fact, had been in numberless instances his method of serving literary persons, who had little or no claim on him, except that they were of that class. I have not conceived it delicate to specify many instances of this kind; but I am at liberty to state, that when he wrote his first article for the Encyclopædia Supplement, and the Editor of that work, Mr. Macvey Napier (a Whig in politics, and with whom he had hardly any personal acquaintance), brought him £100 as his remuneration, Sir Walter said—'Now tell me frankly, if I don't take this money, does it go into your pocket or your publisher's, for it is impossible for me to accept a penny of it from a literary brother.' Mr. Napier assured him that the arrangements of the work were such, that the Editor had nothing to do with the fund destined for contributions:—Scott then pocketed his due, with the observation, that 'he had trees to plant, and no conscience as to the purse of his fat friend'—to wit, Constable.

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[1] Sir Walter had this morning heard of the suicide of a man of warm imagination, to whom, at an earlier period, he was much attached.

[2] See Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xix. p. 283.

At this period, Sir Walter's Diary very seldom mentions anything that could be called a dinner-party. He and his daughter partook generally once in every week the family meal of Mr. and Mrs. Skene; and they did the like occasionally with a few other old friends, chiefly those of the Clerks' table. When an exception occurs, it is easy to see that the scene of social gaiety was doubly grateful from its rarity. Thus one entry, referring to a party at Mr. J. A. Murray's,[2] says—'Went to dine with

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[1] Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xviii. p. 270.

[2] Afterwards Lord Advocate, and now a Judge of the Court of Session, by the title of Lord Murray.—[1839.]

John Murray, where met his brother (Henderland), Jeffrey, Cockburn, Rutherford, and others of that file. Very pleasant—capital good cheer and excellent wine—much laugh and fun. I do not know how it is, but when I am out with a party of my Opposition friends, the day is often merrier than when with our own set. Is it because they are cleverer? Jeffrey and Harry Cockburn are to be sure very extraordinary men; yet it is not owing to that entirely. I believe both parties meet with the feeling of something like novelty. We have not worn out our jests in daily contact. There is also a disposition on such occasions to be courteous, and of course to be pleased.'

Another evening, spent in Rose Court with his old friend, Mr. Clerk, seems to have given him especial delight. He says—'This being a blank day at the Court, I wrote hard till dressing time, when I went to Will Clerk's to dinner. As a bachelor, and keeping a small establishment, he does not do these things often, but they are proportionally pleasant when they come round. He had trusted Sir Adam to bespeak his dinner, who did it *con amore*, so we had excellent cheer, and the wines were various and capital. As I before hinted, it is not every day that N'Nab mounts on horseback,[1] and so our landlord had a little of that solicitude that the party should go off well, which is very flattering to the guests. We had a very pleasant evening. The Chief Commissioner was there, Admiral Adam, J. A. Murray, Tom Thomson, etc. etc.—Sir Adam predominating at the head, and dancing what he calls his merry-andrada in great style. In short, we really laughed, and real laughter is a thing as rare as real tears. I must say, too, there was a *heart*, a kindly feeling prevailed over the party. Can London give such a dinner?—it may, but I never saw one—they are too cold and critical to be easily pleased.——I hope the

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[1] That singular personage, the late M'Nab of *that ilk*, spent his life almost entirely in a district where a boat was the usual conveyance. I suspect, however, there is an allusion to some particular anecdote which I have not recovered.

Bannatyne Club will be really useful and creditable. Thomson is superintending a capital edition of Sir James Melville's Memoirs. It is brave to see how he wags his Scots tongue, and what a difference there is in the form and firmness of the language, compared to the mincing English edition in which he has hitherto been alone known.'

No wonder that it should be a sweet relief from Buonaparte and Blucher to see M'Nab on horseback, and Sir Adam Fergusson in his merry-andrada exaltation, and laugh over old Scotch stories with the Chief Commissioner, and hear Mr. Thomas Thomson report progress as to the doings of the Bannatyne Club. But I apprehend every reader will see that Sir Walter was misled by his own modesty, when he doubted whether London could afford symposia of the same sort. He forgets that he had never mixed in the society of London except in the capacity of a stranger, a rare visitor, the unrivalled literary marvel of the time, and that every party at which he dined was got up expressly on his account, and constituted, whoever might be the landlord, on the natural principle of bringing together as many as the table could hold—to see and hear Sir Walter Scott. Hence, if he dined with a Minister of State, he was likely to find himself seated with half the Cabinet—if with a Bishop, half the Bench had been collected. As a matter of course, every man was anxious to gratify on so rare an occasion as many as he could of those who, in case they were uninvited, would be likely to reproach him for the omission. The result was a crowding together of too many rival eminences; and he very seldom, indeed, witnessed the delightful result so constantly produced in London by the intermingling of distinguished persons of various classes, full of facts and views new to each other—and neither chilled nor perplexed by the pernicious and degrading trickery of lionizing. But, besides, it was unfair to institute any comparison between the society of comparative strangers and that of old friends dear from boyhood. He could not have his Clerks and Fergussons both in Edinburgh and in London. Enough, however, of commentary on a very plain text.

That season was further enlivened by one public dinner, and this, though very briefly noticed in Scott's Diary, occupied a large space in public attention at the time, and, I believe I may add, several columns in every newspaper printed in Europe. His good friend William Murray, manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, invited him to preside at the first festival of a charitable fund then instituted for the behoof of decayed performers. He agreed, and says in his Journal—'There are 300 tickets given out. I fear it will be uncomfortable; and whatever the stoics may say, a bad dinner throws cold water on charity. I have agreed to preside—a situation in which I have been rather felicitous, not by much superiority of art or wisdom, far less of eloquence; but by two or three simple rules, which I put down here for the benefit of my posterity:—

'1*st*, Always hurry the bottle round for five or six rounds, without prosing yourself, or permitting others to prose. A slight fillip of wine inclines people to be pleased, and removes the nervousness which prevents men from speaking—disposes them, in short, to be amusing and to be amused.

'2*nd*, Push on, keep moving, as Young Rapid says.[1] Do not think of saying fine things—nobody cares for them any more than for fine music, which is often too liberally bestowed on such occasions.—Speak at all ventures, and attempt the *mot pour rire*. You will find people satisfied with wonderfully indifferent jokes, if you can but hit the taste of the company, which depends much on its character. Even a very high party, primed with all the cold irony and *non est tanti* feelings or no feelings of fashionable folks, may be stormed by a jovial, rough, round, and ready preses. Choose your text with discretion—the sermon may be as you like. Should a drunkard or an ass break in with anything out of joint, if you can parry it with a jest, good and well—if not, do not exert your serious authority, unless it is something very bad. The authority even of a chairman ought to be very cautiously exercised. With patience you will have the support of every one.

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[1] Morton's comedy of A Cure for the Heart-Ache.

'*3rdly*, When you have drunk a few glasses to play the good-fellow, and banish modesty—(if you are unlucky enough to have such a troublesome companion)—then beware of the cup too much. Nothing is so ridiculous as a drunken preses.

'*Lastly*, always speak short, and *Skeoch doch na skiel*—cut a tale with a drink.

This is the purpose and intent
Of gude Schir Walter's testament.'[1]

This dinner took place on Friday the 23rd February. Sir Walter took the chair, being supported by the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Admiral Adam, Robert Dundas of Arniston, *Peter* Robertson, and many other personal friends. Lord Meadowbank had come on short notice, and was asked abruptly on his arrival to take a toast which had been destined for a noble person who had not been able to appear. He knew that this was the first public dinner at which the object of this toast had appeared since his misfortunes, and taking him aside in the anteroom, asked him whether he would consider it indelicate to hazard a distinct reference to the parentage of the Waverley Novels, as to which there had, in point of fact, ceased to be any obscurity from the hour of Constable's failure. Sir Walter smiled, and said, 'Do just as you like—only don't say much about so old a story.'—In the course of the evening the Judge rose accordingly, and said—[2]

'I would beg leave to propose a toast—the health of one of the Patrons—a great and distinguished individual, whose name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, must ever be received, I will not say with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight, but with those of rapture and enthusiasm. In doing this I feel that I stand in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of my Hon. Friend some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions sure to find a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language, the sincere language, of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom I refer. But it is no longer possible, consistently with the respect due to my auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification, or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled—the *darkness visible* has been cleared away—and the Great Unknown—the minstrel of our native land—the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and the manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the eyes and the hearts of his affectionate and admiring countrymen. If I were capable of imagining all that belongs to this mighty subject—were I able to give utterance to all that as a man, as a Scotsman, and as a friend, I must feel regarding it, yet knowing, as I well do, that this illustrious individual is not more distinguished for his towering talents, than for those feelings which render such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, I would on that account still refrain from doing what would otherwise be no less pleasing to myself than to those who hear me. But this I hope I may be allowed to say—(my auditors would not pardon me were I to say less)—we owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of our country. It is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors and illustrious patriots—who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy—have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure country—it is *He* who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign lands. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. I propose the health of Sir Walter Scott.'

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[1] Sir Walter parodies the conclusion of King Robert the Bruce's Maxims, or Political Testament. See Hailes's Annals, A.D. 1311,—or Fordun's Scoti-chronicon,—xii. 10.

[2] By the favour of a friend, who took notes at this dinner, I am enabled to give a better report of these speeches than that of the contemporary newspapers.

Long before Lord Meadowbank ceased speaking, the company had got upon chairs and tables, and the storm of applause that ensued was deafening. When they recovered from the first fever of their raptures, Sir Walter spoke as follows :—

'I certainly did not think, in coming here to-day, that I should have the task of acknowledging, before 300 gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, has been remarkably well kept. I am now at the bar of my country, and may be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; and so quietly did all who were *airt and pairt* conduct themselves, that I am sure that, were the *panel* now to stand on his defence, every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of *Not Proven.* I am willing, however, to plead *guilty*—nor shall I detain the Court by a long explanation why my confession has been so long deferred. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in the matter. I have now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, are all entirely imputable to myself. Like another Scottish criminal of more consequence, one Macbeth,

> I am afraid to think what I have done;
> Look on't again I dare not.

'I have thus far unbosomed myself, and I know that my confession will be reported to the public. I mean, then, seriously to state, that when I say I am the author, I mean the total and undivided author. With the exception of quotations, there is not a single word that was not derived from myself, or suggested in the course of my reading. The wand is now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels. I would fain dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented several of those characters, of which I had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a truth and liveliness for which I may well be grateful. I beg leave to propose the health of my friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie—and I am sure, that when the author of Waverley and Rob Roy drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it will be received with the just applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed,—nay, that you will take care that on the present occasion it shall be PRO—DI—GI—OUS!' (Long and vehement applause.)

MR. MACKAY.—'My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could never have believed that his son would hae sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown.'

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—'The Small Known now, Mr. Bailie,' etc. etc.

Shortly after resuming his chair, Sir Walter (I am told) sent a slip of paper to Mr. Robertson, begging him to 'confess something too,—why not the murder of Begbie?' (See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 265.) But if Peter complied with the hint, it was long after the senior dignitaries had left the room.

The 'sensation' produced by this scene was, in newspaper phrase, 'unprecedented.' Sir Walter's Diary merely says—'*February* 24. I carried my own instructions into effect the best I could, and if our jests were not good, our laughter was abundant. I think I will hardly take the chair again when the company is so miscellaneous; though they all behaved perfectly well. Meadowbank taxed me with the novels, and to end that farce at once, I pleaded guilty; so that splore is ended. As to the collection—it has been much cry and little woo, as the deil said when he shore the sow. I got away at ten at night. The performers performed very like gentlemen, especially Will Murray.——*March* 2.—Clerk walked home with me from the Court. I was scarce able to keep up with him; could once have done it well enough. Funny thing at the Theatre last night. Among the discourse in High Life below Stairs, one of the ladies' ladies asks who wrote Shakspeare. One says, "Ben Jonson"; another, "Finis." "No," said Will Murray,[1] "it is Sir Walter Scott; he confessed it at a public meeting the other day."'

The reader may, perhaps, expect that I should endeavour to name the 'upwards of twenty persons' whom Sir Walter alluded to on this occasion as having been put into the secret of the Waverley Novels, previously, and without reference, to the catastrophe of 1826. I am by no means sure that I can give the complete list: but in addition to the immediate members of the author's own family—(including his mother and his brother Thomas)—there were Constable, Cadell, the two Ballantynes,—two persons employed in the printing office, namely Daniel M'Corkindale and Daniel Robertson—Mr. Terry, Mr. Laidlaw, Mr. Train, and Mr. G. H. Gordon; Charles Duke of Buccleuch, Lady Louisa Stuart, Lord Montagu, Lord and Lady Polwarth, Lord Kinnedder, Sir Adam Fergusson, Mr. Morritt, Mr. and Mrs. Skene, Mr. William Clerk, Mr. Hay Donaldson, Mr. Thomas Shortreed, Mr. John Richardson, and Mr. Thomas Moore.

The entries in Scott's Diary on contemporary literature are at this time very few; nor are there many on the public events of the day, though the period was a very stirring one. He seems, in fact, to have rarely seen, even when in town, any newspaper except the Edinburgh Weekly Journal. At his age, it is not wonderful that when that sheet reached him it for the most part contained the announcement of a death which interested his feelings; and several of the following passages refer to incidents of this melancholy class:—

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[1] For *W. Murray*, read *Jones.—Note by Mr. Andrew Shortrede.*—[1839.]

'*January* 9.—This morning received the long-expected news of the Duke of York's death. I am sorry both on public and private accounts. His R. H. was, while he occupied the situation of next in succession, a *Breakwater* behind the throne. I fear his brother of Clarence's opinions may be different, and that he may hoist a standard under which men of desperate hopes and evil designs will rendezvous. I am sorry, too, on my own account. The Duke of York was uniformly kind to me, and though I never tasked his friendship, yet I find a powerful friend is gone. His virtues were honour, good sense, integrity; and by exertion of these qualities, he raised the British army from a very low ebb to be the pride and dread of Europe. His errors were those of a sanguine and social temper—he could not resist the temptation of deep play, which was fatally allied with a disposition to the bottle. This last is incident to his complaint, which vinous influence soothes for the time, while it insidiously increases it in the end.

'*January* 17.—I observe in the papers my old friend Gifford's funeral. He was a man of rare attainments and many excellent qualities. His Juvenal is one of the best versions ever made of a classical author, and his satire of the Baviad and Mæviad squabashed at one blow a set of coxcombs, who might have humbugged the world long enough. As a commentator he was capital, could he but have suppressed his rancours against those who had preceded him in the task; but a misconstruction or misinterpretation, nay, the misplacing of a comma, was in Gifford's eyes a crime worthy of the most severe animadversion. The same fault of extreme severity went through his critical labours, and in general he flagellated with so little pity, that people lost their sense of the criminal's guilt in dislike of the savage pleasure which the executioner seemed to take in inflicting the punishment. This lack of temper probably arose from indifferent health, for he was very valetudinary, and realized two verses, wherein he says Fortune assigned him—

> One eye not over good,
> Two sides that to their cost have stood
> A ten years' hectic cough,
> Aches, stitches, all the various ills
> That swell the devilish doctor's bills,
> And sweep poor mortals off.

But he might also justly claim, as his gift, the moral qualities expressed in the next fine stanza—

> A soul
> That spurns the crowd's malign control,
> A firm contempt of wrong;
> Spirits above affliction's power,
> And skill to soothe the lingering hour
> With no inglorious song.

He was a little man, dumpled up together, and so ill made as to seem almost deformed, but with a singular expression of talent in his countenance. Though so little of an athlete, he nevertheless beat off Dr. Wolcott, when that celebrated person, the most unsparing calumniator of his time, chose to be offended with Gifford for satirizing him in his turn. Peter Pindar made a most vehement attack, but Gifford had the best of the affray,[1] and remained, I think, in triumphant possession of the field of action, and of the assailant's cane. G. had one singular custom. He used always to have a duenna of a housekeeper to sit in his study with him while he wrote. This female companion died when I was in London, and his distress was extreme. I afterwards heard he got her place supplied. I believe there was no scandal in all this.

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[1] See Epistle to Peter Pindar, Gifford's Baviad and Mæviad, pp. 181-191, ed. 1812.

'This is another vile day of darkness and rain, with a heavy yellow mist that might become Charing Cross—one of the benefits of our extended city; for that in our atmosphere was unknown till the extent of the buildings below Queen Street.

'*January* 28.—Hear of Miss White's death. Poor Lydia! she gave a dinner on the Friday before, and had written with her own hand invitations for another party. Twenty years ago she used to tease me with her youthful affectations—her dressing like the Queen of Chimney-sweeps on May-day morning, etc.; and sometimes with letting her wit run wild. But she *was* a woman of wit, and had a feeling and kind heart. Poor Lydia! I saw the Duke of York and her in London, when Death, it seems, was brandishing his dart over them.

The view o't gave them little fright.[1]

'*February* 10.—I got a present of Lord Francis Gower's printed but unpublished Tale of the Mill. It is a fine tale of terror in itself, and very happily brought out. He has certainly a true taste for poetry. I do not know why, but from my childhood I have seen something fearful, or melancholy at least, about a mill. Whether I had been frightened at the machinery when very young, of which, I think, I have some shadowy remembrance—whether I had heard the stories of the Miller of Thirlestane, and similar molendinar tragedies, I cannot tell; but not even recollections of the Lass of Patie's Mill, or the Miller of Mansfield, or "he who dwelt on the river Dee," have ever got over my inclination to connect gloom with a mill, especially when the sun is setting. So I entered into the spirit of the terror with which Lord Francis has invested his haunted spot.

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[1] Burns's 'Twa Dogs.'

'*February* 14.—"Death's gi'en the art an unco devel."[1] Sir George Beaumont's dead; by far the most sensible and pleasing man I ever knew—kind, too, in his nature, and generous—gentle in society, and of those mild manners which tend to soften the causticity of the general London tone of persiflage and personal satire. As an amateur painter, he was of the very highest distinction; and though I know nothing of the matter, yet I should hold him a perfect critic on painting, for he always made his criticisms intelligible, and used no slang. I am very sorry—as much as it is in my nature to be for one whom I could see but seldom. He was the great friend of Wordsworth, and understood his poetry, which is a rare thing, for it is more easy to see his peculiarities than to feel his great merit, or follow his abstract ideas.

'A woman of rather the better class, a farmer's wife, was tried a few days ago for poisoning her maid-servant. There seems to have been little doubt of her guilt; but the motive was peculiar. The unfortunate girl had an intrigue with her son, which this Mrs. Smith (I think that is the name) was desirous to conceal, from some ill-advised Puritanic notions, and also for fear of her husband. She could find no better way of hiding the shame than giving the girl (with her own knowledge and consent, I believe) potions to cause abortion, which she afterwards changed for arsenic, as the more effectual silencing medicine. In the course of the trial one of the jury fell down in an epileptic fit, and on his recovery was far too much disordered to permit the trial to proceed. With only fourteen jurymen, it was impossible to go on. The Advocate says she shall be tried anew, since she has not *tholed ane assize. Sic Paulus ait—et recte quidem.* But, having been half-tried, I think she should have some benefit of it, as far as saving her life, if convicted on the second indictment. Lord Advocate declares, however, that she shall be hanged, as certainly she deserves. Yet it looks something like hanging up a man who has been recovered by the surgeons, which has always been accounted harsh justice.

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[1] Death's gi'en the lodge an unco devel,
Tam Sampson's dead.—BURNS.

'*February* 20.—At Court, and waited to see the poisoning woman tried. She is clearly guilty, but as one or two witnesses said the poor wench hinted an intention to poison herself, the jury gave that bastard verdict, *Not proven.* I hate that Caledonian *medium quid.* One who is not *proved guilty*, is innocent in the eyes of law. It was a face to do or die, or perhaps to do to die. Thin features, which had been handsome, a flashing eye, an acute and aquiline nose, lips much marked as arguing decision, and I think, bad temper—they were thin, and habitually compressed, rather turned down at the corners, as one of a rather melancholy disposition. There was an awful crowd; but, sitting within the bar, I had the pleasure of seeing, much at my ease, the constables knocking the other folks about, which was of course very entertaining.

'I have a letter from Baron von Goethe, which I must have read to me: for though I know German, I have forgot their written hand. I make it a rule seldom to read, and never to answer foreign letters from literary folks. It leads to nothing but the battledore and shuttlecock intercourse of compliments, as light as cork and feathers. But Goethe is different, and a wonderful fellow—the Ariosto at once, and almost the Voltaire of Germany. Who could have told me thirty years ago I should correspond and be on something like an equal footing with the author of the Goetz? Ay, and who could have told me fifty things else that have befallen me?'

Goethe's letter (as nearly as the Editor can render it) runs thus:—

'*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.*

'WEIMAR, *January* 12*th*, 1827.

'Mr. H——, well known to me as a collector of objects of art, has given me a likeness, I hope authentic and accurate, of the late Lord Byron, and it awakens anew the sorrow which I could not but feel for the loss of one whom all the world prized, and I in particular: since how could I fail to be delighted with the many expressions of partiality for me which his writings contain?

'Meantime the best consolation for us, the survivors, is to look around us, and consider, that as the departed is not *alone*, but has joined the noble spiritual company of high-hearted men, capable of love, friendship, and confidence, that had left this sphere before him, so we have still kindred spirits on earth, with whom, though not visible any more than the blessed shades of past ages, we have a right to feel a brotherlike connexion—which is indeed our richest inheritance.

'And so, as Mr. H—— informs me he expects to be soon in Edinburgh, I thus acquit myself, mine honoured sir, of a duty which I had long ago felt to be incumbent on me—to acknowledge the lively interest I have during many years taken in your wonderful pictures of human life. I have not wanted external stimulants enough to keep my attention awake on this subject, since not only have translations abounded in the German, but the works are largely read here in the original, and valued according as different men are capable of comprehending their spirit and genius.

'Can I remember that such a man in his youth made himself acquainted with my writings, and even (unless I have been misinformed) introduced them in part to the knowledge of his own nation, and yet defer any longer, at my now very advanced years, to express my sense of such an honour? It becomes me, on the contrary, not to lose the opportunity now offered of praying for a continuance of your kindly regard, and telling you how much a direct assurance of goodwill from your own hand would gratify my old age.

'With high and grateful respect I salute you,

'J. W. v. GOETHE.'

This letter might well delight Scott. Goethe, in writing soon afterwards to his friend Mr. Thomas Carlyle (the translator of the Wilhelm Meister), described the answer as 'cheering and warm-hearted.'

'*To the Baron von Goethe, etc. etc., Weimar.*

'VENERABLE AND MUCH RESPECTED SIR—I received your highly-valued token of esteem by Mr. H——, and have been rarely so much gratified as by finding that any of my productions have been fortunate enough to attract the attention of Baron von Goethe, of whom I have been an admirer ever since the year 1798, when I became a little acquainted with the German language: and soon after gave an example at once of my good taste and consummate assurance, by an attempt to translate Goetz of Berlichingen,—entirely forgetting that it is necessary not only to be delighted with a work of genius, but to be well acquainted with the language in which it is written, before we attempt to communicate its beauty to others. I still set a value on my early translation, however, because it serves to show that I knew at least how to select an object worthy of admiration, although, from the terrible blunders into which I fell, from imperfect acquaintance with the language, it was plain I had not adopted the best way of expressing my admiration.

'I have heard of you often from my son-in-law Lockhart—I do not believe you have a more devout admirer than this young connexion of mine. My friend Sir John Hope of Pinkie has had more lately the honour of seeing you; and I hoped to have written to you—indeed, *did* use that freedom—by two of his kinsmen who were to travel in Germany, but illness intervened and prevented their journey, and my letter was returned after it was two or three months old;—so that I had presumed to claim the acquaintance of Baron von Goethe even before the flattering notice which he has been pleased to bestow on me. It gives to all admirers of genius and literature delight to know that one of the greatest European models enjoys a happy and dignified retirement during an age which is so universally honoured and respected. Fate destined a premature close to that of poor Lord Byron, who was cut off when his life was in the flower, and when so much was hoped and expected from him. He esteemed himself, as I have reason to know, happy in the honour which you did him, and not unconscious of the obligations which he owed to ONE to whom all the authors of this generation have been so much obliged, that they are bound to look up to him with filial reverence.

'I have given another instance that, like other barristers, I am not encumbered with too much modesty, since I have entreated Messrs. Treuttel and Würtz to find some means of conveying to you a hasty, and, of course, rather a tedious attempt to give an account of that remarkable person Napoleon, who had for so many years such a terrible influence in the world. I do not know but what I owe him some obligations, since he put me in arms for twelve years, during which I served in one of our corps of Yeomanry, and notwithstanding an early lameness, became a good horseman, a hunter, and a shooter. Of late these faculties have failed me a little, as the rheumatism, that sad torment of our northern climate, has had its influence on *my* bones. But I cannot complain, since I see my sons pursuing the sport I have given up. My eldest has a troop of Hussars, which is high in our army for a young man of twenty-five; my youngest son has just been made Bachelor of Arts at Oxford, and is returned to spend some months with me before going out into the world. God having been pleased to deprive me of their mother, my youngest daughter keeps my household in order, my eldest being married, and having a family of her own. Such are the domestic circumstances of the person you so kindly enquired after: for the rest, I have enough to live on in the way I like, notwithstanding some very heavy losses; and I have a stately antique chateau (modern antique), to which any friend of Baron von Goethe will be at all times most welcome, with an entrance hall filled with armour, which might have become Jaxthausen itself, and a gigantic bloodhound to guard the entrance.

'I have forgot, however, one who did not use to be forgotten when he was alive:—I hope you will forgive the faults of the composition, in consideration of the author's wish to be as candid toward the memory of this extraordinary man, as his own prejudices would permit. As this opportunity of addressing you opens suddenly by a chance traveller, and must be instantly embraced, I have not time to say more than to wish Baron von Goethe a continuance of health and tranquillity, and to subscribe myself, with sincerity and profound respect, his much honoured and obliged humble servant,

'WALTER SCOTT.'[1]

I now insert a few entries from Sir Walter's Diary, intermixed with extracts from his letters to myself and Mr. Morritt, which will give the reader sufficient information as to the completion of his Life of Buonaparte, and also as to his impressions on hearing of the illness of Lord Liverpool, the consequent dissolution of the Cabinet, and the formation of a new Ministry under Mr. Canning.

DIARY—'*February* 21.—Lord Liverpool is ill of an apoplexy. I am sorry for it. He will be missed. Who will be got for Premier? If Peel would consent to be made a peer, he would do; but I doubt his ambition will prefer the House of Commons. Wrought a good deal.

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[1] I am indebted [1839] to the politeness of Goethe's accomplished friend Mrs. Jameson for a copy of this hasty letter; and I may quote in connexion with it the following passage from that lady's Winter Studies and Rambles in Canada (1838), vol. i. p. 246:—'Everywhere Goethe speaks of Sir Walter Scott with the utmost enthusiasm of admiration, as the greatest writer of his time; he speaks of him as being without his *like*, as without his equal. I remember Goethe's daughter-in-law saying to me playfully—"When my father got hold of one of Scott's romances, there was no speaking to him till he had finished the third volume; he was worse than any girl at a boarding-school with her first novel!"'

Mrs. Jameson says—'All Goethe's family recollect the exceeding pleasure which Sir Walter's letter gave him.'

'*April* 16.—A day of work and exercise. In the evening a letter from L., with the wonderful news that the Ministry has broken up, and apparently for no cause that any one can explain. The old grudge, I suppose, which has gone on like a crack in the side of a house, enlarging from day to day, till down goes the whole.'

'*To John Lockhart, Esq., Wimbledon.*

'. . . Your letter has given me the vertigo—my head turns round like a chariot-wheel, and I am on the point of asking

> Why, how now? Am I Giles, or am I not?

The Duke of Wellington out?—bad news at home, and worse abroad. Lord Anglesea in his situation?—does not much mend the matter. Duke of Clarence in the Navy?—wild work. Lord Melville, I suppose, falls of course—perhaps *cum tota sequela*, about which *sequela*, unless Sir W. Rae and the Solicitor, I care little. The whole is glamour to one who reads no papers, and has none to read. I must get one, though, if this work is to go on, for it is quite bursting in ignorance. Canning is haughty and prejudiced—but, I think, honourable as well as able—*nous verrons.* I fear Croker will shake, and heartily sorry I should feel for that.' . . .

Diary—'*April* 25.—I have now got Boney pegg'd up in the knotty entrails of St. Helena, and may make a short pause. So I finished the review of John Home's works, which, after all, are poorer than I thought them. Good blank verse, and stately sentiment, but something lukewarmish, excepting Douglas, which is certainly a masterpiece. Even that does not stand the closet. Its merits are for the stage; and it is certainly one of the best acting plays going. Perhaps a play to act well should not be too poetical.

'*April* 26.—The snow still profusely distributed, and the surface as our hair used to be in youth, after we had played at some active game, half black, half white, all in large patches. I finished the criticism on Home, adding a string of Jacobite anecdotes, like that which boys put to a kite's tail. Received a great cargo of papers from Bernadotte—some curious, and would have been inestimable two months back, but now my task is almost done. And then my feelings for poor Count Itterberg, the lineal and legitimate, make me averse to have much to do with this child of the revolution.'

'*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq.*

'*April* 26.

'. . . The news you send is certainly the most wonderful of my time, in a party point of view, especially as I can't but think all has turned on personal likings and dislikings. I hope they won't let in the Whigs at the breach, for I suppose, if Lansdowne come in, he must be admitted with a tail on, and Lauderdale will have the weight in Scotland. How our tough Tories may like that, I wot not; but they will do much to keep the key of the corn-chest within reach. The Advocate has not used me extremely kindly, but I shall be sorry if he suffers in this State tempest. For me, I remain, like the Lilliputian poet—"In amaze—Lost I gaze"—or rather as some other bard sings—

So folks beholding at a distance
Seven men flung out of a casement,
They never stir to their assistance,
But just afford them their amazement.[1]

—You ask why the wheels of Napoleon tarry; not by my fault, I swear;

'We daily are jogging,
While whistling and flogging,
While whistling and flogging,
The coachman drives on,
With a hey hoy, gee up gee ho,' etc. etc. etc.

To use a more classical simile—

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[1] Crazy Tales, by John Hall Stevenson.

Wilds immeasurably spread
Seem lengthening as I go.[1]

I have just got some very curious papers from Sweden. I have wrought myself blind between writing and collating, and, except about three or four hours for food and exercise, I have not till to-day *devauled*[2] from my task. . . .

O, Boney, I'll owe you a curse, if Hereafter
  To my vision your tyrannous spectre shall show,
But I doubt you'll be pinned on old Nick's reddest rafter,
  While the vulgar of Tophet howl back from below. . . .

I shall, however, displease Ultras such as Croker, on the subject of Boney, who was certainly a great man, though far from a good man, and still farther from a good king. But the stupidest Roitelet in Europe has his ambition and selfishness, and where will you find his talents? I own I think Ultra-writing only disgusts people, unless it is in the way of a downright invective, and that in history you had much better keep the safe side, and avoid colouring too highly. After all, I suspect, were Croker in presence of Boney to-morrow, he might exclaim, as Captain T. did at one of the Elba levees, "Well, Boney's a d—d good fellow after all."'

'*To the Same.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *May* 10, 1827.

'. . . To speak seriously of these political movements, I cannot say that I approve of the dissidents. I understand Peel had from the King *carte blanche* for an Anti-Catholic Administration, and that he could not accept it because there was not strength enough to form such. What is this but saying in plain words that the Catholics had the country and the Question? And because they are defeated in a single question, and one which, were it to entail no farther consequences, is of wonderfully little import, they have abandoned the King's service—given up the citadel because an exterior work was carried, and marched out into Opposition. I can't think this was right. They ought either to have made a stand without Canning, or a stand with him; for to abdicate as they have done was the way to subject the country to all the future experiments which this Catholic Emancipation may lead those that now carry it to attempt, and which may prove worse, far worse, than anything connected with the Question itself. Thus says the old Scotch Tory. But *I* for one do not believe it was the question of Emancipation, or any public question, which carried them out. I believe the predominant motive in the bosom of every one of them was personal hostility to Canning; and that with more prudence, less arbitrary manners, and more attention to the feelings of his colleagues, he would have stepped *nem. con.* into the situation of Prime Minister, for which his eloquence and talent naturally point him out. They objected to the man more than the statesman, and the Duke of Wellington, more frank than the rest, almost owns that the quarrel was personal. Now, acting upon that, which was, I am convinced, the *real* ground, I cannot think the dissidents acted well and wisely. It is very possible that they might not have been able to go on with Canning; but I think they were bound, as loyal subjects and patriots, to ascertain that continuing in the Cabinet with him as Premier was impossible, before they took a step which may change the whole policy, perhaps eventually the whole destiny of the realm, and lead to the prevalence of those principles which the dissidents have uniformly represented as destructive to the interests of Britain. I think they were bound to have made a trial before throwing Canning—and, alas! both the King and the country—into the hand of the Whigs. These are the sort of truths more visible to the lookers-on than to those who play.

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[1] Goldsmith's Hermit.

[2] Anglicè—*Ceased.*

'As for Canning, with his immense talent, wit, and eloquence, he unhappily wants prudence and patience, and in his eager desire to scramble to the highest point, is not sufficiently select as to his assistants. The Queen's affair is an example of this—Lord Castlereagh's was another. In both he threw himself back by an over-eager desire to press forward, and something of the kind must have been employed now. It cannot be denied that he has placed himself (perhaps more from compulsion than choice) in a situation which greatly endangers his character. Still, however, he has that character to maintain, and unluckily it is all we have to rest upon as things go. The sons of Zeruiah would be otherwise too many for us.[1] It is possible, though I doubt it, that the Whigs will be satisfied with their share of *orts* and *grains*, and content themselves with feeding out of the trough without overturning it. My feeling, were I in the House of Commons, would lead me to stand up and declare that I supported Canning so far, and so far only, as he continued to preserve and maintain the principles which he had hitherto professed—that my allegiance could not be irredeemably pledged to him, because his camp was filled with those against whom I had formerly waged battle under his command—that, however, it should not be mere apprehension of evil that would make me start off—reserving to myself to do what should be called for when the crisis arrived. I think, if a number of intelligent and able men were to hold by Canning on these grounds, they might yet enable him to collect a Tory force around him, sufficient to check at least, if not on all points to resist the course of innovation. If my old friend is wise he will wish to organize such a force, for nothing is more certain than that if the champion of Anti-Jacobinism should stoop to become the tool of the Whigs, it is not all his brilliancy of talents, eloquence, and wit, which can support him in such a glaring want of consistency. *Meliora spero.* I do not think Canning can rely on his Whig confederates, and some door of reconciliation may open itself as unexpectedly as the present confusion has arisen.'

DIARY—'*May* 11.—The boar of the Forest called this morning to converse about trying to get him on the pecuniary list of the Royal Literary Society. Certainly he deserves it, if genius and necessity can do so. But I do not belong to the society, nor do I propose to enter it as a coadjutor. I do not like your royal academies of this kind; they almost always fall into jobs, and the members are seldom those who do credit to the literature of a country. It affected, too, to comprehend those men of letters who are specially attached to the Crown, and though I love and honour my King as much as any of them can, yet I hold it best, in this free country, to preserve the exterior of independence, that my loyalty may be the more impressive, and tell more effectually. Yet I wish sincerely to help poor Hogg, and have written to Lockhart about it. It may be my own desolate feelings—it may be the apprehension of evil from this political hocus-pocus; but I have seldom felt more moody and uncomfortable than while writing these lines. I have walked, too, but without effect. W. Laidlaw, whose very ingenious mind is delighted with all novelties, talked nonsense about the new government, in which men are to resign principle, I fear, on both sides.

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[1] 2 Samuel ii. 18.

'Parliament House a queer sight. Looked as if people were singing to each other the noble song of "The sky's falling—chickie diddle." Thinks I to myself, I'll keep a calm sough.

Betwixt both sides I unconcerned stand by—
Hurt can I laugh, and harmless need I cry?

'*May* 15.—I dined at a great dinner given by Sir George Clerk to his electors, the freeholders of Mid-Lothian; a great attendance of Whig and Tory, huzzaing each other's toasts. *If* is a good peacemaker, but quarter-day is a better. I have a guess the best game-cocks would call a truce, if a handful or two of oats were scattered among them.

'*May* 27.—I got ducked in coming home from the Court. Made a hard day of it. Scarce stirred from one room to another, but by bedtime finished a handsome handful of copy. I have quoted Gourgaud's evidence; I suppose he will be in a rare passion, and may be addicted to vengeance, like a long-moustached son of a French bitch as he is.

Frenchman, Devil, or Don,
Damn him, let him come on,
He shan't scare a son of the Island.[1]

'*May* 28.—Another day of uninterrupted study; two such would finish the work with a murrain. What shall I have to think of when I lie down at night and awake in the morning? What will be my plague and my pastime—my curse and my blessing—as ideas come and the pulse rises, or as they flag and something like a snow-haze covers my whole imagination?—I have my Highland Tales—and then—never mind—sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.—Letter from John touching public affairs; don't half like them, and am afraid we shall have the Whig alliance turn out like the calling in of the Saxons. I told this to Jeffrey, who said they would convert us as the Saxons did the British. I shall die in my Paganism for one. I don't like a bone of them as a party. Ugly reports of the King's health; God pity this poor country should that be so, but I hope it is a thing devised by the enemy.

'*June* 3.—Wrought hard. I thought I had but a trifle to do, but new things cast up; we get beyond the Life, however, for I have killed him to-day. The newspapers are very saucy; the *Sun* says I have got £4000 for suffering a Frenchman to look over my manuscript. Here is a proper fellow for you! I wonder what he thinks Frenchmen are made of—walking money bags, doubtless. "Now," as Sir Fretful Plagiary says, "another person would be vexed at this," but I care not one brass farthing.

'*June* 5.—Proofs. Parliament House till two. Commenced the character of Buonaparte. To-morrow being a Teind-day, I may hope to get it finished.

'*June* 10.—Rose with the odd consciousness of being free of my daily task. I have heard that the fishwomen go to church of a Sunday with their creels new washed, and a few stones in them for ballast, just because they cannot walk steadily without their usual load. I feel something like them, and rather inclined to take up some light task, than to be altogether idle. I have my proof-sheets, to be sure ; but what are these to a whole day? A good thought came in my head to write Stories for little Johnnie Lockhart, from the History of Scotland, like those taken from the History of England. But I will not write mine quite so simply as Croker has done.[1] I am persuaded both children and the lower class of readers hate books which are written *down* to their capacity, and love those that are composed more for their elders and betters. I will make, if possible, a book that a child shall understand, yet a man will feel some temptation to peruse should he chance to take it up. It will require, however, a simplicity of style not quite my own. The grand and interesting consists in ideas, not in words. A clever thing of this kind might have a race.'

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[1] Sir W. *varies* a verse of '*The tight little Island.*'

'*To John B. S. Morritt, Esq., Portland Place, London.*

'EDINBURGH, *June* 10, 1827.

'MY DEAR MORRITT—Napoleon has been an absolute millstone about my neck, not permitting me for many a long day to think my own thoughts, to work my own work, or to write my own letters—which last clause of prohibition has rendered me thus long your debtor. I am now finished—*valeat quod valere potest*—and as usual not very anxious about the opinion of the public, as I have never been able to see that such anxiety has any effect in mollifying the minds of the readers, while it renders that of the author very uncomfortable—so *vogue la galère.*

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[1] The following note accompanied a copy of the First Series of the Tales of a Grandfather:—

'*To the Right Hon. J. W. Croker.*

'MY DEAR CROKER—I have been stealing from you, and as it seems the fashion to compound felony, I send you a sample of the *swag*, by way of stopping your mouth. . . . Always yours, W. SCOTT.'

'How are you, as a moderate pro-Catholic, satisfied with this strange alliance in the Cabinet? I own I look upon it with doubt at best, and with apprehensions. At the same time I cannot approve of the late Ministers leaving the King's councils in such a hurry. They could hardly suppose that Canning's fame, talent, and firm disposition would be satisfied with less than the condition of Premier, and such being the case—

> To fly the boar before the boar pursued,
> Was to incense the boar to follow them.[1]

On the other hand, his allying himself so closely and so hastily with the party against whom he had maintained war from youth to age seems to me, at this distance, to argue one of two things;—either that the Minister has been hoodwinked by ambition and anger—or that he looks upon the attachment of those gentlemen to the opinions which he has always opposed as so slight, unsubstantial, and unreal, that they will not insist upon them, or any of them, provided they are gratified personally with a certain portion of the benefits of place and revenue. Now, not being disposed to think over well of the Whigs, I cannot suppose that a large class of British statesmen, not deficient certainly in talents, can be willing to renounce all the political maxims and measures which they have been insisting upon for thirty years, merely to become placeholders under Canning. The supposition is too profligate. But then, if they come in the same Whigs we have known them, where, how, or when are they to execute their favourite notions of Reform of Parliament? and what sort of amendments will they be which are to be brought forward when the proper time comes? or how is Canning to conduct himself when the Saxons, whom he has called in for his assistance, draw out to fight for a share of the power which they have assisted him to obtain? When such strange and unwonted bedfellows are packed up together, will they not kick and struggle for the better share of the coverlid and blankets? Perhaps you will say that I look gloomily on all this, and have forgotten the way of the world, which sooner or later shows that the principles of statesmen are regulated by their advance towards, or retreat from power; and that from men who are always acting upon the emergencies of the moment, it is in vain to expect consistency. Perfect consistency, I agree, we cannot look for—it is inconsistent with humanity. But that gross inconsistency which induces men to clasp to their bosom the man whom they most hated, and to hold up to admiration the principles which they have most forcibly opposed, may gain a temporary triumph, but will never found a strong Ministry or a settled Government. My old friend Canning, with his talents and oratory, ought not, I think, to have leagued himself with any party, but might have awaited, well assured that the general voice must have carried him into full possession of power. I am sorry he has acted otherwise, and argue no good from it, though when or how the evil is to come I cannot pretend to say.

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[1] King Richard III. Act III. Scene 2.

'My best compliments wait on your fireside.—I conclude you see Lady Louisa Stuart very often, which is a happiness to be envied.—Ever yours, most kindly,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

I received, some years ago, from a very modest and intelligent young man, the late Mr. Robert Hogg (a nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd), employed in 1827 as a *reader* in Ballantyne's printing-office, a letter for which this is perhaps the most proper place.

'*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq.*

'EDINBURGH, 16*th February* 1833.

'SIR—Having been for a few days employed by Sir Walter Scott, when he was finishing his Life of Buonaparte, to copy papers connected with that work, and to write occasionally to his dictation, it may perhaps be in my power to mention some circumstances relative to Sir Walter's habits of composition, which could not fall under the observation of any one except a person in the same situation with myself, and which are therefore not unlikely to pass altogether without notice.

'When, at Sir Walter's request, I waited upon him to be informed of the business in which he needed my assistance, after stating it, he asked me if I was an early riser, and added that it would be no great hardship for me, being a young man, to attend him the next morning at six o'clock. I was punctual, and found Sir Walter already busy writing. He appointed my tasks, and again sat down at his own desk. We continued to write during the regular work hours till six o'clock in the evening, without interruption, except to take breakfast and dinner, which were served in the room beside us, so that no time was lost;—we rose from our desks when everything was ready, and resumed our labours when the meals were over. I need not tell you, that during these intervals Sir Walter conversed with me as if I had been on a level of perfect equality with himself.

'I had no notion it was possible for any man to undergo the fatigue of composition for so long a time at once, and Sir Walter acknowledged he did not usually subject himself to so much exertion, though it seemed to be only the manual part of the operation that occasioned him any inconvenience. Once or twice he desired me to relieve him, and dictated while I wrote with as much rapidity as I was able. I have performed the same service to several other persons most of whom walked up and down the apartment while excogitating what was to be committed to writing; they sometimes stopped too, and, like those who fail in a leap and return upon their course to take the advantage of another race, endeavoured to hit upon something additional by perusing over my shoulder what was already set down,—mending a phrase, perhaps, or recasting a sentence, till they should recover their wind. None of these aids were necessary to Sir Walter: his thoughts flowed easily and felicitously, without any difficulty to lay hold of them, or to find appropriate language; which was evident by the absence of all solicitude (*miseria cogitandi*) from his countenance. He sat in his chair, from which he rose now and then, took a volume from the bookcase, consulted it, and restored it to the shelf—all without intermission in the current of ideas, which continued to be delivered with no less readiness than if his mind had been wholly occupied with the words he was uttering. It soon became apparent to me, however, that he was carrying on two distinct trains of thought, one of which was already arranged, and in the act of being spoken, while at the same time he was in advance considering what was afterwards to be said. This I discovered by his sometimes introducing a word which was wholly out of place—*entertained* instead of *denied*, for example,—but which I presently found to belong to the next sentence, perhaps four or five lines farther on, which he had been preparing at the very moment that he gave me the words of the one that preceded it. Extemporaneous orators of course, and no doubt many writers, think as rapidly as was done by Sir Walter; but the mind is wholly occupied with what the lips are uttering or the pen is tracing. I do not remember any other instance in which it could be said that two threads were kept hold of at once—connected with each other indeed, but grasped at different points. I was, as I have said, two or three days beside Sir Walter, and had repeated opportunities of observing the same thing.—I am, sir, respectfully your obliged humble servant, ROBERT HOGG.'

The Life of Buonaparte, then, was at last published about the middle of June 1827. Two years had elapsed since Scott began it; but, by a careful comparison of dates, I have arrived at the conclusion that, his expeditions to Ireland and Paris, and the composition of novels and critical miscellanies being duly allowed for, the historical task occupied hardly more than twelve months. The book was closely printed; in fact, those nine volumes contain as much letterpress as Waverley, Guy Mannering, The Antiquary, The Monastery, and The Legend of Montrose, all put together. If it had been printed on the original model of those novels, the Life of Buonaparte would have filled from thirteen to fourteen volumes,—the work of one twelvemonth—done in the midst of pain, sorrow, and ruin.

The magnitude of the theme, and the copious detail with which it was treated, appear to have frightened the critics of the time. None of our great Reviews grappled with the book at all; nor am I so presumptuous as to undertake what they shrunk from. The general curiosity with which it was expected, and the satisfaction with which high and candid minds perused it, cannot I believe be better described than in the words of the author's most illustrious literary contemporary.

> 'Walter Scott,' says Goethe, 'passed his childhood among the stirring scenes of the American War, and was a youth of seventeen or eighteen when the French Revolution broke out. Now well advanced in the fifties, having all along been favourably placed for observation, he proposes to lay before us his views and recollections of the important events through which he has lived. The richest, the easiest, the most celebrated narrator of the century, undertakes to write the history of his own time.
>
> 'What expectations the announcement of such a work must have excited in me, will be understood by any one who remembers that I, twenty years older than Scott, conversed with Paoli in the twentieth year of my age, and with Napoleon himself in the sixtieth.
>
> 'Through that long series of years, coming more or less into contact with the great doings of the world, I failed not to think seriously on what was passing around me, and, after my own fashion, to connect so many extraordinary mutations into something like arrangement and interdependence.
>
> 'What could now be more delightful to me, than leisurely and calmly to sit down and listen to the discourse of such a man, while clearly, truly, and with all the skill of a great artist, he recalls to me the incidents on which through life I have meditated, and the influence of which is still daily in operation?'—*Kunst und Altherthum.*

The lofty impartiality with which Scott treats the personal character of Buonaparte was, of course, sure to make all ultra-politicians at home and abroad condemn his representation; and an equally general and better founded exception was taken to the lavish imagery of his historical style. He despised the former clamour—to the latter he bowed submissive. He could not, whatever character he might wish to assume, cease to be one of the greatest of poets. Metaphorical illustrations, which men born with prose in their souls hunt for painfully, and find only to murder, were to him the natural and necessary offspring and playthings of ever-teeming fancy. He could not write a note to his printer—he could not speak to himself in his Diary—without introducing them. Few will say that his historical style is, on the whole, excellent; none that it is perfect; but it is completely unaffected, and therefore excites nothing of the unpleasant feeling with which we consider the elaborate artifices of a far greater historian—the greatest that our literature can boast—Gibbon. The rapidity of the execution infers many inaccuracies as to minor matters of fact; but it is nevertheless true that no inaccuracy in the smallest degree affecting the character of the book as a fair record of great events has to this hour been detected even by the malevolent ingenuity of Jacobin and Buonapartist pamphleteers. Even the most hostile examiners were obliged to acknowledge that the gigantic career of their idol had been traced, in its leading features, with wonderful truth and spirit. No civilian, it was universally admitted, had ever before described modern battles and campaigns with any approach to his daring and comprehensive felicity. The public, ever unwilling to concede a new species of honour to a name already covered with distinction, listened eagerly for a while to the indignant reclamations of nobodies, whose share in mighty transactions had been omitted, or slightly misrepresented; but, ere long, all these pompous rectifications were summed up—and found to constitute nothing but a contemptible monument of self-deluding vanity. The work, devoured at first with breathless delight, had a shade thrown over it for a time by the pertinacious blustering of these angry Lilliputians; but it has now emerged, slowly and surely, from the mist of suspicion—and few, whose opinions deserve much attention, hesitate to avow their conviction that, whoever may be the Polybius of the modern Hannibal, posterity will recognise his Livy in Scott.

Woodstock, as we have seen, placed upwards of £8000 in the hands of Sir Walter's creditors. The Napoleon (first and second editions) produced for them a sum which it even now startles me to mention—£18,000. As by the time the historical work was published, nearly half of the First Series of Chronicles of the Canongate had been written, it is obvious that the amount to which Scott's literary industry, from the close of 1825 to the 10th of June 1827, had diminished his debt, cannot be stated at less than £28,000. Had health been spared him, how soon must he have freed himself from all his encumbrances!

CHAPTER LXXIV

Excursion to St. Andrews—Deaths of Lady Diana Scott, Constable, and Canning—Extract from Mr. Adolphus's Memoranda—Affair of General Gourgaud—Letter to Mr. Clerk—Blythswood—Corehouse—Duke of Wellington's Visit to Durham—Dinner in the Castle—Sunderland—Ravensworth—Alnwick—Verses to Sir Cuthbert Sharp—Affair of Abud & Co.—Publication of the Chronicles of the Canongate, series first—and of the first Tales of a Grandfather—Essay on Planting, etc.—Miscellaneous prose works collected—Sale of the Waverley Copyrights—Dividend to Creditors.

JUNE—DEC. 1827

MY wife and I spent the summer of 1827, partly at a sea-bathing place near Edinburgh, and partly in Roxburghshire; and I shall, in my account of the sequel of this year, draw, as it may happen, on Sir Walter's Diary, his letters, the memoranda of friendly visitors, or my own recollections. The arrival of his daughter and her children at Portobello was a source of constant refreshment to him during June; for every other day he came down and dined there, and strolled about afterwards on the beach; thus interrupting, beneficially for his health, and I doubt not for the result of his labours also, the new custom of regular night-work, or, as he called it, of serving double-tides. When the Court released him, and he returned to Abbotsford, his family did what they could to keep him to his ancient evening habits; but nothing was so useful as the presence of his invalid grandson. The poor child was at this time so far restored as to be able to sit his pony again; and Sir Walter, who had, as the reader observed, conceived, the very day he finished Napoleon, the notion of putting together a series of stories on the history of Scotland, somewhat in the manner of Mr. Croker's on that of England, rode daily among the woods with his 'Hugh Littlejohn,' and told the tale, and ascertained that it suited the comprehension of boyhood, before he reduced it to writing. Sibyl Grey had been dismissed in consequence of the accident at the Catrail; and he had now stooped his pride to a sober, steady creature, of very humble blood; dun, with black mane and legs; by name Douce Davie, *alias* the Covenanter. This, the last of his steeds, by the way, had been previously in the possession of a jolly old laird in a neighbouring county, and acquired a distinguished reputation by its skill in carrying him home safely when dead drunk. Douce Davie, on such occasions, accommodated himself to the swerving balance of his rider with such nice discrimination, that, on the laird's death, the country people expected a vigorous competition for the sagacious animal; but the club-companions of the defunct stood off to a man when it was understood that the Sheriff coveted the succession.

The Chronicles of the Canongate proceeded *pari passu* with these historical tales; and both works were published before the end of the year. He also superintended, at the same time, the first collection of his Prose Miscellanies, in six volumes 8vo—several articles being remodelled and extended to adapt them for a more permanent sort of existence than had been originally thought of. Moreover, Sir Walter penned, that autumn, his beautiful and instructive paper on the Planting of Waste Lands, which is indeed no other than a precious chapter of his autobiography, for the Quarterly Review.[1] What he wrote of new matter between June and December, fills from five to six volumes in the late uniform edition of his works; but all this was light and easy after the perilous drudgery of the preceding eighteen months.

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[1] See Miscellaneous Prose Works (edition 1836), vol. xxi.

The Blair-Adam Club, this year, had their headquarters at Charleton, in Fife—the seat of the founder's son-in-law, Mr. Anstruther Thomson ; and one of their drives was to the two ancient mansions of Ely and Balcaskie. 'The latter,' says Sir Walter in his Diary, 'put me in mind of poor Philip Anstruther, dead and gone many a long year since. He was a fine, gallant, light-hearted young sailor. I remember the story of his drawing on his father for some cash, which produced an angry letter from old Sir Robert, to which Philip replied, that if he did not know how to write like a gentleman, he did not desire any more of his correspondence. Balcaskie is much dilapidated ; but they are restoring the house in the good old style, with its terraces and yew hedges.'

Another morning was given to St. Andrews, which one of the party had never before visited. 'The ruins,' he says, 'have been lately cleared out. They had been chiefly magnificent from their size, not their richness in ornament.[1] I did not go up to St. Rule's Tower, as on former occasions ; this is a falling off, for when before did I remain sitting below when there was a steeple to be ascended? But the rheumatism has begun to change that vein for some time past, though I think this is the first decided sign of acquiescence in my lot. I sat down on a gravestone, and recollected the first visit I made to St. Andrews, now thirty-four years ago. What changes in my feelings and my fortunes have since then taken place!—some for the better, many for the worse. I remembered the name I then carved in runic characters on the turf beside the castle-gate, and I asked why it should still agitate my heart. But my friends came down from the tower, and the foolish idea was chased away.'

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[1] I believe there is no doubt that the Metropolitan Cathedral of St. Andrews had been the *longest* in Europe—a very remarkable fact, when one thinks of the smallness and poverty of the country. It is stated, with minute calculations, and much exultation, by an old Scotch writer—*Volusenus* (*i.e.* Wilson)—in his once celebrated treatise *De Tranquillitate Animi.*

On the 22nd of July, his Diary bears the date of *Minto.* He then says—'We rubbed up some recollections of twenty years ago, when I was more intimate in the family, till Whig and Tory separated us for a time. By the way, nobody talks Whig or Tory just now, and the fighting men on each side go about muzzled and mute, like dogs after a proclamation about canine madness. Am I sorry for this truce or not? Half and half. It is all we have left to stir the blood, this little political brawling. But better too little of it than too much.—Here I have received news of two deaths at once; Lady Die Scott, my very old friend, and Archibald Constable, the bookseller.'—He adds next day—'Yes! they are both, for very different reasons, subjects of reflection. Lady Diana Scott, widow of Walter Scott of Harden, was the last person whom I recollect so much older than myself, that she kept always at the same distance in point of age, so that she scarce seemed older to me (relatively) two years ago, when in her ninety-second year, than fifty years before. She was the daughter (alone remaining) of Pope's Earl of Marchmont, and, like her father, had an acute mind, and an eager temper. She was always kind to me, remarkably so indeed when I was a boy.—Constable's death might have been a most important thing to me if it had happened some years ago, and I should then have lamented it much. He has lived to do me some injury; yet, excepting the last £5000, I think most unintentionally. He was a prince of booksellers; his views sharp, powerful, and liberal; too sanguine, however, and like many bold and successful schemers, never knowing when to stand or stop, and not always calculating his means to his object with mercantile accuracy. He was very vain, for which he had some reason, having raised himself to great commercial eminence, as he might also, with good management, have attained great wealth. He knew, I think, more of the business of a bookseller, in planning and executing popular works, than any man of his time. In books themselves, he had much bibliographical information, but none whatever that could be termed literary. He knew the rare volumes of his library, not only by the eye, but by the touch, when blindfolded. Thomas Thomson saw him make this experiment, and that it might be complete, placed in his hand an ordinary volume instead of one of these *libri rariores*. He said he had overestimated his memory; he could not recollect that volume. Constable was a violent-tempered man with those he dared use freedom with. He was easily overawed by people of consequence; but, as usual, took it out of those whom poverty made subservient to him. Yet he was generous, and far from bad-hearted:—in person good-looking, but very corpulent latterly; a large feeder, and deep drinker, till his health became weak. He died of water in the chest, which the natural strength of his constitution set long at defiance. I have no great reason to regret him; yet I do. If he deceived me, he also deceived himself.'

Constable's spirit had been effectually broken by his downfall. To stoop from being *primus absque secundo* among the Edinburgh booksellers, to be the occupant of an obscure closet of a shop, without capital, without credit, all his mighty undertakings abandoned or gone into other hands, except indeed his Miscellany, which he had now no resources for pushing on in the fashion he once contemplated—this reverse was too much for that proud heart. He no longer opposed a determined mind to the ailments of the body, and sunk on the 21st of this month, having, as I am told, looked, long ere he took to his bed, at least ten years older than he was. He died in his 54th year; but into that space he had crowded vastly more than the usual average of zeal and energy, of hilarity and triumph, and perhaps of anxiety and misery.

About this time the rumour became prevalent that Mr. Canning's health was breaking up among toils and mortifications of another order, and Scott's Diary has some striking entries on this painful subject. Meeting Lord Melville casually at the seat of a common friend towards the end of July, he says—'I was sorry to see my very old friend, this upright statesman and honourable gentleman, deprived of his power, and his official income, which the number of his family must render a matter of importance. He was cheerful, not affectedly so, and bore his declension like a wise and brave man. Canning said the office of Premier was his by inheritance; he could not, from constitution, hold it above two years, and then it would descend to Peel. Such is ambition! Old friends forsaken—old principles changed—every effort used to give the vessel of the State a new direction, and all to be Palinurus for two years!'

Of the 10th of August—when the news of Mr. Canning's death reached Abbotsford—and the day following, are these entries:—'The death of the Premier is announced—late George Canning—the witty, the accomplished, the ambitious;—he who had toiled thirty years, and involved himself in the most harassing discussions, to attain this dizzy height; he who had held it for three months of intrigue and obloquy—and now a heap of dust, and that is all. He was an early and familiar friend of mine, through my intimacy with George Ellis. No man possessed a gayer and more playful wit in society; no one, since Pitt's time, had more commanding sarcasm in debate; in the House of Commons he was the terror of that species of orators called the Yelpers. His lash fetched away both skin and flesh, and would have penetrated the hide of a rhinoceros. In his conduct as a statesman he had a great fault; he lent himself too willingly to intrigue. Thus he got into his quarrel with Lord Castlereagh, and lost credit with the country for want of openness. Thus, too, he got involved with the Queen's party to such an extent, that it fettered him upon that miserable occasion, and obliged him to butter Sir Robert Wilson with *dear friend*, and *gallant general*, and so forth. The last composition with the Whigs was a sacrifice of principle on both sides. I have some reason to think they counted on getting rid of him in two or three years. To me Canning was always personally most kind. I saw, with pain, a great change in his health when I met him at Colonel Bolton's, at Storrs, in 1825. In London last year I thought him looking better. My nerves have for these two or three last days been susceptible of an acute excitement from the slightest causes; the beauty of the evening, the sighing of the summer breeze, bring the tears into my eyes not unpleasantly. But I must take exercise, and case-harden myself. There is no use in encouraging these moods of the mind.

'*August* 11.—Wrote nearly five pages; then walked. A visit from Henry Scott; nothing known as yet about politics. A High Tory Administration would be a great evil at this time. There are repairs in the structure of our constitution which ought to be made at this season, and without which the people will not long be silent. A pure Whig Administration would probably play the devil by attempting a thorough repair. As to a compound, or melodramatic Ministry, the parts out of which such a one could be organised just now are at a terrible discount in public estimation, nor will they be at par in a hurry again. The public were generally shocked at the complete lack of principle testified on the late occasion, and by some who till then had high credit. The Duke of Wellington has risen by his firmness on the one side, Earl Grey on the other.'

He received, about this time, a third visit from Mr. J. L. Adolphus. The second occurred in August 1824, and since that time they had not met. I transcribe a few paragraphs from my friend's memoranda, on which I formerly drew so largely: He says—

'Calamity had borne heavily upon Sir Walter in the interval; but the painful and anxious feeling with which a friend is approached for the first time under such circumstances, gave way at once to the unassumed serenity of his manner. There were some signs of age about him which the mere lapse of time would scarcely have accounted for; but his spirits were abated only, not broken; if they had sunk, they had sunk equably and gently. It was a declining, not a clouded sun. I do not remember, at this period, hearing him make any reference to the afflictions he had suffered, except once, when, speaking of his Life of Napoleon, he said "he knew that it had some inaccuracies, but he believed it would be found right in all essential points"; and then added, in a quiet but affecting tone, "I could have done it better, if I could have written at more leisure, and with a mind more at ease." One morning a party was made to breakfast at Chiefswood; and any one who on that occasion looked at and heard Sir Walter Scott, in the midst of his children, and grandchildren, and friends, must have rejoiced to see that life still yielded him a store of pleasures, and that his heart was as open to their influence as ever.

'I was much struck by a few words which fell from him on this subject a short time afterwards. After mentioning an accident which had spoiled the promised pleasure of a visit to his daughter in London, he then added—"I am like Seged, Lord of Ethiopia, in the Rambler, who said that he would have ten happy days, and all turned to disappointment. But, however, I have had as much happiness in my time as most men, and I must not complain now." I said, that whatever had been his share of happiness, no man could have laboured better for it. He answered—"I consider the capacity to labour as part of the happiness I have enjoyed."

'Abbotsford was not much altered since 1824. I had then seen it complete even to the statue of Maida at the door, though in 1824 old Maida was still alive, and now and then raised a majestic bark from behind the house. It was one of the little scenes of Abbotsford life which should have been preserved by a painter, when Sir Walter strolled out in a sunny morning to caress poor Maida, and condole with him upon being so "very frail"; the aged hound dragging his gaunt limbs forward, painfully, yet with some remains of dignity, to meet the hand and catch the deep affectionate tones of his master.

'The greatest observable difference which the last three years had made in the outward appearance of Abbotsford, was in the advanced growth of the plantations. Sir Walter now showed me some rails and palisades, made of their wood, with more self-complacency than I ever saw him betray on any other subject. The garden did not appear to interest him so much, and the "mavis and merle" were, upon principle, allowed to use their discretion as to the fruit. His favourite afternoon exercise was to ramble through his grounds, conversing with those who accompanied him, and trimming his young trees with a large knife. Never have I received an invitation more gladly than when he has said—"If you like a walk in the plantations, I will bestow my tediousness upon you after one o'clock." His conversation at such times ran in that natural, easy, desultory course, which accords so well with the irregular movements of a walk over hill and woodland, and which he has himself described so well in his epistle to Mr. Skene.[1] I remember with particular pleasure one of our walks through the romantic little ravine of the Huntly-Burn. Our progress was leisurely, for the path was somewhat difficult to him. Occasionally he would stop, and, leaning on his walking-stick and fixing his eyes on those of the hearer, pour forth some sonorous stanza of an old poem applicable to the scene, or to the last subject of the conversation. Several times we paused to admire the good taste, as it seemed, with which his great Highland staghound Nimrod always displayed himself on those prominent points of the little glen, where his figure, in combination with the scenery, had the most picturesque effect. Sir Walter accounted for this by observing that the situations were of that kind which the dog's instinct would probably draw him to if looking out for game. In speaking of the Huntly-Burn I used the word "brook." "It is hardly that," said he, "it is just a runnel." Emerging into a more open country, we saw a road a little below us, on each side of which were some feathery saplings. "I like," he said, "that way of giving an eyelash to the road." Independently of the recollections called up by particular objects, his eye and mind always seemed to dwell with a perfect complacency on his own portion of the vale of

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[1] See Marmion—Poetical Works, vol. vii. p. 182.

Tweed: he used to say that he did not know a more "liveable" country.

'A substitute for walking, which he always very cheerfully used, and which at last became his only resource for any distant excursion, was a ride in a four-wheeled open carriage, holding four persons, but not absolutely limited to that number on an emergency. Tame as this exercise might be in comparison with riding on horseback, or with walking under propitious circumstances, yet as he was rolled along to Melrose, or Bowhill, or Yair, his spirits always freshened; the air, the sounds, the familiar yet romantic scenes, wakened up all the poetry of his thoughts, and happy were they who heard it resolve itself into words. At the sight of certain objects—for example, in passing the green foundations of the little chapel of Lindean, where the body of the "Dark Knight of Liddesdale" was deposited, on its way to Melrose, it would, I suppose, have been impossible for him, unless with a companion hopelessly unsusceptible or preoccupied, to forbear some passing comment, some harping (if the word may be favourably used) on the tradition of the place. This was, perhaps, what he called "bestowing his tediousness"; but if any one could think these effusions tedious because they often broke forth, such a man might have objected against the rushing of the Tweed, or the stirring of the trees in the wind, or any other natural melody, that he had heard the same thing before.

'Some days of my visit were marked by an almost perpetual confinement to the house; the rain being incessant. But the evenings were as bright and cheerful as the atmosphere of the days was dreary. Not that the gloomiest morning could ever be wearisome under a roof where, independently of the resources in society which the house afforded, the visitor might ransack a library, unique, I suppose, in some of its collections, and in all its departments interesting and characteristic of the founder. So many of the volumes were enriched with anecdotes or comments in his own hand, that to look over his books was in some degree conversing with him. And sometimes this occupation was pleasantly interrupted by a snatch of actual conversation with himself, when he entered from his own room, to consult or take away a book. How often have I heard with pleasure, after a long silence, the uneven step, the point of the stick striking against the floor, and then seen the poet himself emerge from his study, with a face of thought but yet of cheerfulness, followed perhaps by Nimrod, who stretched his limbs and yawned, as if tired out with some abstruse investigation.

'On one of the rainy days I have alluded to, when walking at the usual hour became hopeless, Sir Walter asked me to sit with him while he continued his morning occupation, giving me, for my own employment, the publications of the Bannatyne Club. His study, as I recollect it, was strictly a workroom, though an elegant one. It has been fancifully decked out in pictures, but it had, I think, very few articles of mere ornament. The chief of these was the print of Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims, which hung over the chimneypiece, and, from the place assigned to it, must have been in great favour, though Sir Walter made the characteristic criticism upon it, that, if the procession were to move, the young squire who is prancing in the foreground would in another minute be over his horse's head. The shelves were stored with serviceable books; one door opened into the great library, and a hanging-stair within the room itself communicated with his bedroom. It would have been a good lesson to a desultory student, or even to a moderately active amanuensis, to see the unintermitted energy with which Sir Walter Scott applied himself to his work. I conjectured that he was at this time writing the Tales of a Grandfather. When we had sat down to our respective employments, the stillness of the room was unbroken, except by the light rattle of the rain against the windows, and the dashing trot of Sir Walter's pen over his paper; sounds not very unlike each other, and which seemed to vie together in rapidity and continuance. Sometimes, when he stopped to consult a book, a short dialogue would take place upon the subjects with which I was occupied;

about Mary Queen of Scots, perhaps, or Viscount Dundee; or, again, the silence might be broken for a moment by some merry outcry in the hall, from one of the little grandchildren, which would half waken Nimrod, or Bran, or Spice, as they slept at Sir Walter's feet, and produce a growl or a stifled bark, not in anger, but by way of protest. For matters like these, work did not proceed the worse, nor, as it seemed to me, did Sir Walter feel at all discomposed by such interruptions as a message, or the entrance of a visitor. One door of his study opened into the hall, and there did not appear to be any understanding that he should not be disturbed. At the end of our morning we attempted a sortie, but had made only a little way in the shrubbery-walks overlooking the Tweed, when the rain drove us back. The river, swollen and discoloured, swept by majestically, and the sight drew from Sir Walter his favourite lines—

> I've seen Tweed's silver streams, glittering in the sunny beams,
> Turn drumly and dark, as they roll'd on their way.

There could not have been a better moment for appreciating the imagery of the last line. I think it was in this short walk that he mentioned to me, with great satisfaction, the favourable prospects of his literary industry, and spoke sanguinely of retrieving his "losses with the booksellers."

'Those who have seen Abbotsford will remember that there is at the end of the hall, opposite to the entrance of the library, an arched doorway leading to other rooms. One night some of the party observed that, by an arrangement of light, easily to be imagined, a luminous space was formed upon the library door, in which the shadow of a person standing in the opposite archway made a very imposing appearance, the body of the hall remaining quite dark. Sir Walter had some time before told his friends of the deception of sight (mentioned in his Demonology) which made him for a moment imagine a figure of Lord Byron standing in the same hall.[1] The discoverers of the little phantasmagoria which I have just described, called to him to come and see *their* ghost. Whether he thought that raising ghosts at a man's door was not a comely amusement, or whether the parody upon a circumstance which had made some impression upon his own fancy was a little too strong, he certainly did not enter into the jest.

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[1] 'Not long after the death of a late illustrious poet, who had filled, while living, a great station in the eye of the public, a literary

'On the subjects commonly designated as the "marvellous," his mind was susceptible, and it was delicate. He loved to handle them in his own manner and at his own season, not to be pressed with them, or brought to anything like a test of belief or disbelief respecting them. There is, perhaps, in most minds, a point more or less advanced, at which incredulity on these subjects may be

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friend, to whom the deceased had been well known, was engaged, during the darkening twilight of an autumn evening, in perusing one of the publications which professed to detail the habits and opinions of the distinguished individual who was now no more. As the reader had enjoyed the intimacy of the deceased to a considerable degree, he was deeply interested in the publication, which contained some particulars relating to himself and other friends. A visitor was sitting in the apartment, who was also engaged in reading. Their sitting-room opened into an entrance-hall, rather fantastically fitted up with articles of armour, skins of wild animals, and the like. It was when laying down his book, and passing into this hall, through which the moon was beginning to shine, that the individual of whom I speak, saw right before him, and in a standing posture, the exact representation of his departed friend, whose recollection had been so strongly brought to his imagination. He stopped for a single moment, so as to notice the wonderful accuracy with which fancy had impressed upon the bodily eye the peculiarities of dress and posture of the illustrious poet. Sensible, however, of the delusion, he felt no sentiment save that of wonder at the extraordinary accuracy of the resemblance, and stepped onwards towards the figure, which resolved itself, as he approached, into the various materials of which it was composed. These were merely a screen, occupied by greatcoats, shawls, plaids, and such other articles as usually are found in a country entrance-hall. The spectator returned to the spot from which he had seen the illusion, and endeavoured, with all his power, to recall the image which had been so singularly vivid. But this was beyond his capacity; and the person who had witnessed the apparition, or, more properly, whose excited state had been the means of raising it, had only to return into the apartment, and tell his young friend under what a striking hallucination he had for a moment laboured.'—Scott's *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, pp. 38-9.

found to waver. Sir Walter Scott, as it seemed to me, never cared to ascertain very precisely where this point lay in his own mental constitution; still less, I suppose, did he wish the investigation to be seriously pursued by others. In no instance, however, was his colloquial eloquence more striking than when he was well launched in some "tale of wonder." The story came from him with an equally good grace, whether it was to receive a natural solution, to be smiled at as merely fantastical, or to take its chance of a serious reception.'

About the close of August Sir Walter's Diary is chiefly occupied with an affair which, as the reader of the previous chapter is aware, did not come altogether unexpectedly on him. Among the documents laid before him in the Colonial Office, when he was in London at the close of 1826, were some which represented one of Buonaparte's attendants at St. Helena, General Gourgaud, as having been guilty of gross unfairness, giving the English Government private information that the Emperor's complaints of ill-usage were utterly unfounded, and yet then, and afterwards, aiding and assisting the delusion in France as to the harshness of Sir Hudson Lowe's conduct towards his captive. Sir Walter, when using these remarkable documents, guessed that Gourgaud might be inclined to fix a personal quarrel on himself; and there now appeared in the newspapers a succession of hints that the General was seriously bent on this purpose. He applied, as '*Colonel Grogg*' would have done forty years before, to '*The Baronet.*'

DIARY—'*August* 27.—A singular letter from a lady, requesting me to father a novel of hers. That won't pass. Cadell transmits a notice from the French papers that Gourgaud has gone, or is going, to London; and the bibliopolist is in a great funk. I lack some part of his instinct. I have done Gourgaud no wrong. I have written to Will Clerk, who has mettle in him, and will think of my honour as well as my safety.'

'*To William Clerk, Esq., Rose Court, Edinburgh.*

'Abbotsford, *27th August* 1827.

'My dear Clerk—I am about to claim an especial service from you in the name of our long and intimate friendship. I understand, from a passage in the French papers, that General Gourgaud has, or is about to set out for London, to *verify* the facts averred concerning him in my History of Napoleon. Now, in case of a personal appeal to me, I have to say that his confessions to Baron Sturmer, Count Balmain, and others at St. Helena, confirmed by him in various recorded conversations with Mr. Goulburn, then Under Secretary of State—were documents of a historical nature which I found with others in the Colonial Office, and was therefore perfectly entitled to use. If his language has been misrepresented, he has certainly been very unfortunate; for it has been misrepresented by four or five different people to whom he said the same things, true or false he knows best. I also acted with delicacy towards him, leaving out whatever related to his private quarrels with Bertrand, etc., so that, in fact, he has no reason to complain of me, since it is ridiculous to suppose I was to suppress historical evidence, furnished by him voluntarily, because his present sentiments render it unpleasing for him that those which he formerly entertained should be known. Still, like a man who finds himself in a scrape, General Gourgaud may wish to fight himself out of it, and if the quarrel should be thrust on me—why, *I will not baulk him, Jackie.* He shall not dishonour the country through my sides I can assure him. I have, of course, no wish to bring the thing to such an arbitrement. Now, in this case, I shall have occasion for a sensible and resolute friend, and I naturally look for him in the companion of my youth, on whose firmness and sagacity I can with such perfect confidence rely. If you can do me this office of friendship, will you have the kindness to let me know where or how we can form a speedy junction, should circumstances require it?

'After all, the matter may be a Parisian *on dit.* But it is best to be prepared. The passages are in the ninth volume of the book. Pray look at them. I have an official copy of the principal communication. Of the others I have abridged extracts. Should he desire to see them, I conceive I cannot refuse to give him copies, as it is likely they may not admit him to the Colonial Office. But if he asks any apology or explanation for having made use of his name, it is my purpose to decline it and stand to consequences. I am aware I could march off upon the privileges of literature, and so forth, but I have no taste for that species of retreat; and if a gentleman says to me I have injured him, however captious the quarrel may be, I certainly do not think, as a man of honour, I can avoid giving him satisfaction, without doing intolerable injury to my own feelings, and giving rise to the most malignant animadversions. I need not say that I shall be anxious to hear from you, and that I always am, dear Clerk, affectionately yours, WALTER SCOTT.'

DIARY—'*September* 4.—William Clerk quite ready and willing to stand my friend if Gourgaud should come my road. He agrees with me that there is no reason why he should turn on me, but that if he does, reason or none, it is best to stand buff to him. It appears to me that what is least forgiven in a man of any mark or likelihood, is want of that article blackguardly called *pluck.* All the fine qualities of genius cannot make amends for it. We are told the genius of poets, especially, is irreconcilable with this species of grenadier accomplishment. If so, *quel chien de genre!*

'*September* 10.—Gourgaud's wrath has burst forth in a very distant clap of thunder, in which he accuses me of contriving, with the Ministry, to slander his rag of a reputation. He be d—d for a fool, to make his case worse by stirring. I shall only revenge myself by publishing the whole extracts I made from the records of the

Colonial Office, in which he will find enough to make him bite his nails.

'*September* 17.—Received from James Ballantyne the proofs of my Reply, with some cautious balaam from mine honest friend, alarmed by a Highland colonel, who had described Gourgaud as a *mauvais garçon*, famous fencer, marksman, and so forth. I wrote, in answer, which is true, that I hoped all my friends would trust to my acting with proper caution and advice ; but that if I were capable, in a moment of weakness, of doing anything short of what my honour demanded, I should die the death of a poisoned rat in a hole, out of mere sense of my own degradation. God knows, that, though life is placid enough with me, I do not feel anything to attach me to it so strongly as to occasion my avoiding any risk which duty to my character may demand from me.—I set to work with the Tales of a Grandfather, second volume, and finished four pages.'

'*To the Editor of the Edinburgh Weekly Journal.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *Sept.* 14, 1827.

'SIR—I observed in the London papers which I received yesterday, a letter from General Gourgaud, which I beg you will have the goodness to reprint, with this communication and the papers accompanying it.

'It appears, that the General is greatly displeased, because, availing myself of formal official documents, I have represented him, in my Life of Buonaparte, as communicating to the British Government and the representatives of others of the Allied Powers, certain statements in matter, which he seems at present desirous to deny or disavow, though in what degree, or to what extent, he has not explicitly stated.

'Upon these grounds, for I can discover no other, General Gourgaud has been pleased to charge me, in the most intemperate terms, as the agent of a plot, contrived by the late British Ministers, to slander and dishonour him. I will not attempt to imitate the General either in his eloquence or his invective, but confine myself to the simple fact, that his accusation against me is as void of truth as it is of plausibility. I undertook, and carried on, the task of writing the Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, without the least intercourse with, or encouragement from, the Ministry of the time, or any person connected with them ; nor was it until my task was very far advanced, that I asked and obtained permission from the Earl Bathurst, then Secretary for the Colonial Department, to consult such documents as his office afforded, concerning the residence of Napoleon at St. Helena. His Lordship's liberality, with that of Mr. Hay, the Under Secretary, permitted me, in the month of October last, personal access to the official records, when I inspected more than sixteen quarto volumes of letters, from which I made memoranda or extracts at my own discretion, unactuated by any feeling excepting the wish to do justice to all parties.

'The papers relating to General Gourgaud and his communications were not pointed out to me by any one. They occurred, in the course of my researches, like other pieces of information, and were of too serious and important a character, verified as they were, to be omitted in the history. The idea that, dated and authenticated as they are, they could have been false documents, framed to mislead future historians, seems as absurd, as it is positively false that they were fabricated on any understanding with me, who had not at the time of their date the slightest knowledge of their existence.

'To me, evidence, *ex facie* the most unquestionable, bore, that General Gourgaud had attested certain facts of importance to different persons, at different times and places ; and it did not, I own, occur to me that what he is stated to have made the subject of grave assertion and attestation, could or ought to be received as matter of doubt, because it rested only on a verbal communication made before responsible witnesses, and was not concluded by any formal signature of the party. I have been accustomed to consider a gentleman's word as equally worthy of credit with his handwriting.

'At the same time, in availing myself of these documents, I felt it a duty to confine myself entirely to those particulars which concerned the history of Napoleon, his person and his situation at St. Helena; omitting all subordinate matters in which General Gourgaud, in his communications with our Ministers and others, referred to transactions of a more private character, personal to himself and other gentlemen residing at St. Helena. I shall observe the same degree of restraint as far as possible, out of the sincere respect I entertain for the honour and fidelity of General Gourgaud's companions in exile, who might justly complain of me for reviving the memory of petty altercations; but out of no deference to General Gourgaud, to whom I owe none. The line which General Gourgaud has adopted, obliges me now, in respect to my own character, to lay the full evidence before the public—subject only to the above restriction—that it may appear how far it bears out the account given of those transactions in my History of Napoleon. I should have been equally willing to have communicated my authorities to General Gourgaud in private, had he made such a request, according to the ordinary courtesies of society.

'I trust that, upon reference to the Life of Napoleon, I shall be found to have used the information these documents afforded with becoming respect to private feelings, and, at the same time, with the courage and candour due to the truth of history. If I were capable of failing in either respect, I should despise myself as much, if possible, as I do the resentment of General Gourgaud. The historian's task of exculpation is of course ended, when he has published authorities of apparent authenticity. If General Gourgaud shall undertake to prove that the subjoined documents are false and forged, in whole or in part, the burden of the proof will lie with himself; and something better than the assertion of the party interested will be necessary to overcome the testimony of Mr. Goulburn and the other evidence.

'There is indeed another course. General Gourgaud may represent the whole of his communications as a trick played off upon the English Ministers, in order to induce them to grant his personal liberty. But I cannot imitate the General's disregard of common civility, so far as to suppose him capable of a total departure from veracity, when giving evidence upon his word of honour. In representing the Ex-Emperor's health as good, his finances as ample, his means of escape as easy and frequent, while he knew his condition to be the reverse in every particular, General Gourgaud must have been sensible that the deceptive views thus impressed on the British Ministers must have had the natural effect of adding to the rigours of his patron's confinement. Napoleon, it must be recollected, would receive the visits of no English physician in whom Sir Hudson Lowe seemed to repose confidence, and he shunned, as much as possible, all intercourse with the British. Whom, therefore, were Sir Hudson Lowe and the British Ministers to believe concerning the real state of his health and circumstances, if they were to refuse credit to his own aide-de-camp, an officer of distinction, whom no one could suppose guilty of slandering his master for the purpose of obtaining a straight passage to England for himself, instead of being subjected to the inconvenience of going round by the Cape of Good Hope? And again, when General Gourgaud, having arrived in London, and the purpose of his supposed deception being fully attained, continued to represent Napoleon as feigning poverty whilst in affluence, affecting illness whilst in health, and possessing ready means of escape whilst he was complaining of unnecessary restraint—what effect could such statements produce on Lord Bathurst and the other members of the British Ministry, except a disregard to Napoleon's remonstrances, and a rigorous increase of every precaution necessary to prevent his escape? They had the evidence of one of his most intimate personal attendants to justify them for acting thus; and their own responsibility to Britain, and to Europe, for the safe custody of Napoleon, would have rendered them inexcusable had they acted otherwise.

'It is no concern of mine, however, how the actual truth of the fact stands. It is sufficient to me to have shown, that I have not laid to General Gourgaud's charge a single expression for which I had not the most indubitable authority. If I have been guilty of over-credulity in attaching more weight to General Gourgaud's evidence than it deserves, I am well taught not to repeat the error, and the world, too, may profit by the lesson.—I am, Sir, your humble servant, WALTER SCOTT.'

To this letter Gourgaud made a fiery rejoinder; but Scott declined to prolong the paper war, simply stating in Ballantyne's print, that 'while leaving the question to the decision of the British public, he should have as little hesitation in referring it to the French nation, provided the documents he had produced were allowed to be printed in the French newspapers, *from which hitherto they had been excluded.*' And he would indeed have been idle had he said more than this, for his cause had been taken up on the instant by every English journal, of whatever politics, and the *Times* thus summed up its very effective demolition of his antagonist:—

> Sir Walter Scott did that which would have occurred to every honest man, whose fair-dealing had violent imputations cast upon it. He produced his authorities, extracted from the Colonial Office. To these General Gourgaud's present pamphlet professes to be a reply; but we do conscientiously declare, that with every readiness to acknowledge—and, indeed, with every wish to discover—something like a defence of the character of General Gourgaud, whose good name has alone been implicated—(for that of Sir Walter was abundantly cleared, even had the official documents which he consulted turned out to be as false as they appear to be unquestionable),—the charge against the General stands precisely where it was before this ill-judged attempt at refutation was published; and in no one instance can we make out a satisfactory answer to the plain assertion, that Gourgaud had in repeated instances either betrayed Buonaparte or sacrificed the truth. In the General's reply to Sir Walter Scott's statement there is enough, even to satiety, of declamation against the English Government under Lord Castlereagh, of subterfuge and equivocation with regard to the words on record against himself, and of gross abuse and Billingsgate against the historian who has placarded him; but of direct and successful negative there is not one syllable. The Aide-de-camp of St. Helena shows himself to be nothing better than a cross between a blusterer and a sophist.

Sir Walter's family were, of course, relieved from considerable anxiety, when the newspapers ceased to give paragraphs about General Gourgaud; and the blowing over of this alarm was particularly acceptable to his eldest daughter, who had to turn southwards about the beginning of October. He himself certainly cared little or nothing about that (or any similar) affair; and if it had any effect at all upon his spirits, they were pleasurably excited and stimulated. He possessed a pair of pistols taken from Napoleon's carriage at Waterloo, and presented to him, I believe, by the late Hon. Colonel James Stanhope, and he said he designed to make use of them, in case the controversy should end in a rencounter, and his friend Clerk should think as well as he did of their fabric. But this was probably a jest. I may observe that I *once* saw Sir Walter shoot at a mark with pistols, and he acquitted himself well; so much so as to excite great admiration in some young officers whom he had found practising in his barn on a rainy day. With the rifle, he is said by those who knew him in early life, to have been a very good shot indeed.

Before Gourgaud fell quite asleep, Sir Walter made an excursion to Edinburgh to meet his friends, Mrs. Maclean Clephane and Lady Northampton, with whom he had some business to transact; and they, feeling, as all his intimate friends at this time did, that the kindliest thing they could do by him was to keep him as long as possible away from his desk, contrived to seduce him into escorting them as far as Greenock on their way to the Hebrides. He visited on his return his esteemed kinsman, Mr. Campbell of Blythswood,[1] in whose park he saw, with much interest, the Argyle Stone, marking the spot where the celebrated Earl was taken prisoner in 1685. He notes in his Diary, that 'the Highland drovers are still apt to break Blythswood's fences to see this Stone'; and then records the capital turtle, etc. of his friend's entertainment, and some good stories told at table, especially this:—'Prayer of the minister of the Cumbrays, two miserable islands in the mouth of the Clyde: "O Lord, bless and be gracious to the Greater and the Lesser Cumbrays, and in thy mercy do not forget the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland." This is *nos poma natamus* with a vengeance.'

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[1] Archibald Campbell, Esq., Lord Lieutenant of Renfrewshire, and often M.P. for Glasgow. This excellent man, whose memory will long be honoured in the district which his munificent benevolence adorned, died in London, September 1838, aged 75.

Another halt was at the noble seat of his early friend Cranstoun, by the Falls of the Clyde. He says—'Cranstoun and I walked before dinner. I never saw the Great Fall of Corra Linn from this side before, and I think it the best point perhaps; at all events, it is not that from which it is usually seen; so Lord Corehouse has the sight, and escapes the locusts. This is a superb place. Cranstoun has as much feeling about improvement as other things. Like all new improvers, he is at more expense than is necessary, plants too thick, and trenches where trenching is superfluous. But this is the eagerness of a young artist. Besides the grand lion, the Fall of Clyde, he has more than one lion's whelp—a fall of a brook in a cleugh called Mill's Gill must be superb in rainy weather. The old Castle of Corehouse, too, is much more castle-like on this than from the other side. My old friend was very happy when I told him the favourable prospect of my affairs. To be sure, if I come through, it will be wonder to all, and most to myself.'

On returning from this trip, Scott found an invitation from Lord and Lady Ravensworth to meet the Duke of Wellington at their castle near Durham. The Duke was then making a progress in the north of England, to which additional importance was given by the uncertain state of political arrangements;—the chance of Lord Goderich's being able to maintain himself as Canning's successor seeming very precarious—and the opinion that his Grace must soon be called to a higher station than that of Commander of the Forces, which he had accepted under the new Premier, gaining ground every day. Sir Walter, who felt for the Great Captain the pure and exalted devotion that might have been expected from some honoured soldier of his banners, accepted this invitation, and witnessed a scene of enthusiasm with which its principal object could hardly have been more gratified than he was.

DIARY—'*October* 1.—I set about work for two hours, and finished three pages; then walked for two hours; then home, adjusted sheriff processes, and cleared the table. I am to set off to-morrow for Ravensworth Castle, to meet the Duke of Wellington; a great let-off, I suppose. Yet I would almost rather stay, and see two days more of Lockhart and my daughter, who will be off before my return. Perhaps—— But there is no end to *perhaps*. We must cut the rope, and let the vessel drive down the tide of destiny.

'*October* 2.—Set out in the morning at seven, and reached Kelso by a little past ten with my own horses. Then took the Wellington coach to carry me to Wellington—smart that. Nobody inside but an old lady, who proved a toywoman in Edinburgh; her head furnished with as substantial ware as her shop, but a good soul, I'se warrant her. Heard all her debates with her landlord about a new door to the cellar—and the propriety of paying rent on the 15th or 25th of May. Landlords and tenants will have different opinions on *that* subject. We dined at Wooler, where an obstreperous horse retarded us for an hour at least, to the great alarm of my friend the toywoman.—*N.B.* She would have made a good feather-bed if the carriage had happened to fall, and her undermost. The heavy roads had retarded us near an hour more, so that I hesitated to go to Ravensworth so late; but my goodwoman's tales of dirty sheets, and certain recollections of a Newcastle inn, induced me to go on. When I arrived, the family had just retired. Lord Ravensworth and Mr. Liddell came down, however, and both received me as kindly as possible.

'*October* 3.—Rose about eight or later. My morals begin to be corrupted by travel and fine company. Went to Durham with Lord Ravensworth betwixt one and two. Found the gentlemen of Durham county and town assembled to receive the Duke of Wellington. I saw several old friends, and with difficulty suited names to faces, and faces to names. There were Dr. Philpotts, Dr. Gilly, and his wife, and a world of acquaintance,—among others, Sir Thomas Lawrence; whom I asked to come on to Abbotsford, but he could not. He is, from habit of coaxing his subjects I suppose, a little too fair spoken, otherwise very pleasant. The Duke arrived very late. There were bells, and cannon, and drums, trumpets, and banners, besides a fine troop of yeomanry. The address was well expressed, and as well answered by the Duke. The enthusiasm of the ladies and the gentry was great—the common people more lukewarm. The Duke has lost popularity in accepting political power. He will be more useful to his country, it may be, than ever, but will scarce be so gracious in the people's eyes—and he will not care a curse for what outward show he has lost. But I must not talk of curses, for we are going to take our dinner with the Bishop of Durham.—We dined about one hundred and forty or fifty men, a distinguished company for rank and property. Marshal Beresford, and Sir John,[1] amongst others—Marquis of Lothian, Lord Feversham, Marquis Londonderry—and I know not who besides—

Lords and Dukes and noble Princes,
All the pride and flower of Spain.

We dined in the old baronial hall, impressive from its rude antiquity, and fortunately free from the plaster of former improvement, as I trust it will long be from the gingerbread taste of modern Gothicizers. The bright moon streaming in through the old Gothic windows contrasted strangely with the artificial lights within; spears, banners, and armour were intermixed with the pictures of old bishops, and the whole had a singular mixture of baronial pomp with the grave and more chastened dignity of prelacy. The conduct of our reverend entertainer suited the character remarkably well. Amid the welcome of a Count Palatine he did not for an instant forget the gravity of the Church dignitary. All his toasts were gracefully given, and his little speeches well made, and the more affecting that the failing voice sometimes reminded us that our host laboured under the infirmities of advanced life. To me personally the Bishop was very civil.'

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[1] Admiral Sir John Beresford had some few years before this commanded on the Leith station—when Sir Walter and he saw a great deal of each other—'and merry men were they.'

In writing to me next day, Sir Walter says—'The dinner was one of the finest things I ever saw; it was in the old Castle Hall, untouched, for aught I know, since Anthony Beck feasted Edward Longshanks on his way to invade Scotland.[1] The moon streamed through the high latticed windows as if she had been curious to see what was going on.' I was also favoured with a letter on the subject from Dr. Philpotts (now Bishop of Exeter), who said—'I wish you had witnessed this very striking scene. I never saw curiosity and enthusiasm so highly excited, and I may add, as to a great part of the company, so nearly balanced. Sometimes I doubted whether the hero or the poet was fixing most attention—the latter, I need hardly tell you, appeared unconscious that he was regarded differently from the others about him, until the good Bishop rose and proposed his health.' Another friend, the Honourable Henry Liddell, enables me to give the words ('*ipsissima verba*') of Sir Walter in acknowledging this toast. He says—'The manner in which Bishop Van Mildert proceeded on this occasion will never be forgotten by those who know how to appreciate scholarship without pedantry, and dignity without ostentation. Sir Walter had been observed throughout the day with extraordinary interest—I should rather say enthusiasm.—The Bishop gave his health with peculiar felicity, remarking that he could reflect upon the labours of a long literary life, with the consciousness that everything he had written tended to the practice of virtue, and to the improvement of the human race. Sir Walter replied, "that upon no occasion of his life had he ever returned thanks for the honour done him in drinking his health, with a stronger sense of obligation to the proposer of it than on the present—that hereafter he should always reflect with great pride upon that moment of his existence, when his health had been given *in such terms*, by the Bishop of Durham *in his own baronial hall*, surrounded and supported by the assembled aristocracy of the two northern counties, and *in the presence of the Duke of Wellington*."'

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[1] The warlike Bishop Beck accompanied Edward I. in his Scotch expedition, and if we may believe Blind Harry, very narrowly missed having the honour to die by the hand of Wallace in a skirmish on the street of Glasgow.

The Diary continues—

'Mrs. Van Mildert held a sort of drawing-room after we rose from table, at which a great many ladies attended. After this we went to the Assembly-rooms, which were crowded with company. Here I saw some very pretty girls dancing merrily that old-fashioned thing called a country-dance, which Old England has now thrown aside, as she would do her creed, if there were some foreign frippery offered instead. We got away after midnight, a large party, and reached Ravensworth Castle—Duke of Wellington, Lord Londonderry, and about twenty besides—about half-past one. Soda water, and to bed by two.

'*October* 4.—Slept till nigh ten—fatigued by our toils of yesterday, and the unwonted late hours. Still too early for this Castle of Indolence, for I found few of last night's party yet appearing. I had an opportunity of some talk with the Duke. He does not consider Foy's book as written by himself, but as a thing *got up* perhaps from notes. Mentioned that Foy, when in Spain, was, like other French officers, very desirous of seeing the English papers, through which alone they could collect any idea of what was going on without their own cantonments, for Napoleon permitted no communication of that kind with France. The Duke growing tired of this, at length told

Baron Tripp, whose services he chiefly used in communications with the outposts, that he was not to give them the newspapers. "What reason shall I allege for withholding them?" said Tripp. "None," replied the Duke —"Let *them* allege some reason why they want them." Foy was not at a loss to assign a reason. He said he had considerable sums of money in the English funds, and wanted to see how stocks fell and rose. The excuse, however, did not go down.—I remember Baron Tripp, a Dutch nobleman, and a dandy of the first water, and yet with an energy in his dandyism which made it respectable. He drove a gig as far as Dunrobin Castle, and back again, *without a whip*. He looked after his own horse, for he had no servant, and after all his little establishment of clothes and necessaries, with all the accuracy of a *petit maître*. He was one of the best-dressed men possible, and his horse was in equally fine condition as if he had had a dozen of grooms. I met him at Lord Somerville's, and liked him much. But there was something exaggerated, as appeared from the conclusion of his life. Baron Tripp shot himself in Italy for no assignable cause.

'What is called great society, of which I have seen a good deal in my day, is now amusing to me, because from age and indifference I have lost the habit of considering myself as a part of it, and have only the feelings of looking on as a spectator of the scene, who can neither play his part well nor ill, instead of being one of the *dramatis personæ*; so, careless of what is thought of myself, I have full time to attend to the motions of others.

'Our party went to-day to Sunderland, when the Duke was brilliantly received by an immense population, chiefly of seamen. The difficulty of getting into the rooms was dreadful—an ebbing and flowing of the crowd, which nearly took me off my legs. The entertainment was handsome; about two hundred dined, and appeared most hearty in the cause which had convened them—some indeed so much so, that, finding themselves so far on the way to perfect happiness, they e'en would go on. After the dinner-party broke up, there was a ball, numerously attended, where there was a prodigious anxiety discovered for shaking of hands. The Duke had enough of it, and I came in for my share; for, though as jackal to the lion, I got some part in whatever was going. We got home about half-past two in the morning, sufficiently tired.'

Some months afterwards, Sir Cuthbert Sharp, who had been particularly kind and attentive to Scott when at Sunderland, happened, in writing to him on some matter of business, to say he hoped he had not forgotten his friends in that quarter. Sir Walter's answer to Sir Cuthbert (who had been introduced to him by his old and dear friend Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth) begins thus:—

'Forget thee? No! my worthy fere!
Forget blithe mirth and gallant cheer!
Death sooner stretch me on my bier!
Forget thee? No.

Forget the universal shout
When "canny Sunderland" spoke out—
A truth which knaves affect to doubt—
Forget thee? No.

Forget you? No—though now-a-day
I've heard your knowing people say,
Disown the debt you cannot pay,
You'll find it far the thriftiest way—
But I?—O no.

Forget your kindness found for all room,
In what, though large, seem'd still a small room,
Forget my *Surtees* in a ball room—
Forget you? No.

Forget your sprightly dumpty-diddles,
And beauty tripping to the fiddles,
Forget my lovely friends the *Liddells*—
Forget you? No.

'So much for oblivion, my dear Sir C.; and now, having dismounted from my Pegasus, who is rather spavined, I charge a-foot, like an old dragoon as I am,' etc. etc.

'DIARY—*October* 5.—A quiet day at Ravensworth Castle, giggling and making giggle among the young and frank-hearted young people. The Castle is modern, excepting always two towers of great antiquity. Lord R. manages his woods admirably well. In the evening plenty of fine music, with heart as well as voice and instrument. Much of this was the spontaneous effusions of Mrs. Arkwright (a daughter of Stephen Kemble), who has set Hohenlinden, and other pieces of poetry, to music of a highly-gifted character. The Miss Liddells and Mrs. Barrington sang "The Campbells are coming," in a tone that might have waked the dead.

'*October* 6.—Left Ravensworth this morning, and travelled as far as Whittingham with Marquis of Lothian. Arrived at Alnwick to dinner, where I was very kindly received. The Duke of Northumberland is a handsome man, who will be corpulent if he does not continue to take hard exercise. The Duchess very pretty and lively, but her liveliness is of that kind which shows at once it is connected with thorough principle, and is not liable to be influenced by fashionable caprice. The habits of the family are early and regular; I conceive they may be termed formal and old-fashioned by such visitors as claim to be the pink of the mode. The Castle is a fine old pile, with various courts and towers, and the entrance is magnificent. It wants, however, the splendid features of a keep. The inside fitting up is an attempt at Gothic, but the taste is meagre and poor, and done over with too much gilding. It was done half a century ago, when this kind of taste was ill understood. I found here the Bishop of Gloucester,[1] etc. etc.

'*October* 7.—This morning went to church, and heard an excellent sermon from the Bishop of Gloucester; he has great dignity of manner, and his accent and delivery are forcible. Drove out with the Duke in a phaeton, and saw part of the park, which is a fine one lying along the Alne. But it has been ill planted. It was laid out by the celebrated Brown, who substituted clumps of birch and Scottish firs for the beautiful oaks and copse which grow nowhere so freely as in Northumberland. To complete this the late Duke did not thin, so the wood is in a poor state. All that the Duke cuts down is so much waste, for the people will not buy it where coals are so cheap. Had they been oak-coppice, the bark would have fetched its value; had they been grown oaks, the seaports would have found a market; had they been larch, the country demands for ruder purposes would have been unanswerable. The Duke does the best he can to retrieve his woods, but seems to despond more than a young man ought to do. It is refreshing to see such a man in his situation give so much of his time and thoughts to the improvement of his estates, and the welfare of the people. He tells me his people in Keeldar were all quite wild the first time his father went up to shoot there. The women had no other dress than a bed-gown and petticoat. The men were savage, and could hardly be brought to rise from the heath, either from sullenness or fear. They sung a wild tune, the burden of which was *orsina*, *orsina*, *orsina*. The females sang, the men danced round, and at a certain point of the tune they drew their dirks, which they always wore.

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[1] Dr. Bethell, who had been tutor to the Duke of Northumberland, held at this time the See of Gloucester. He was thence translated to Exeter, and latterly to Bangor.—[1839.]

'We came by the remains of an old Carmelite Monastery, which form a very fine object in the park. It was finished by De Vesci. The gateway of Alnwick Abbey, also a fine specimen, is standing about a mile distant. The trees are much finer on the left side of the Alne, where they have been let alone by the capability villain. Visited the *enceinte* of the Castle, and passed into the dungeon. There is also an armoury, but damp, and the arms in indifferent order. One odd petard-looking thing struck me.—Mem. to consult Grose. I had the honour to sit in Hotspur's seat, and to see the Bloody Gap, a place where the external wall must have been breached.

The Duchess gave me a book of etchings of the antiquities of Alnwick and Warkworth from her own drawings. I had half a mind to stay to see Warkworth, but Anne is alone. We had prayers in the evening read by the Archdeacon.'[1]

On the 8th Sir Walter reached Abbotsford, and forthwith resumed his Grandfather's Tales, which he composed throughout with the ease and heartiness reflected in this entry:—'This morning was damp, dripping, and unpleasant; so I even made a work of necessity, and set to the Tales like a dragon. I murdered Maclellan of Bomby at the Thrieve Castle; stabbed the Black Douglas in the town of Stirling; astonished King James before Roxburgh; and stifled the Earl of Mar in his bath, in the Canongate. A wild world, my masters, this Scotland of ours must have been. No fear of want of interest; no lassitude in those days for want of work—

For treason, d'ye see,
Was to them a dish of tea,
  And murder bread and butter.'

Such was his life in autumn 1827. Before I leave the period, I must note how greatly I admired the manner in which all his dependents appeared to have met the reverse of his fortunes—a reverse which inferred very considerable alteration in the circumstances of every one of them. The butler, instead of being the easy chief of a large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five-and-twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman in ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier than they had ever done before. Their good conduct had given every one of them a new elevation in his own mind—and yet their demeanour had gained, in place of losing, in simple humility of observance. The great loss was that of William Laidlaw, for whom (the estate being all but a fragment in the hands of the trustees and their agent) there was now no occupation here. The cottage, which his taste had converted into a lovable retreat, had found a rent-paying tenant; and he was living a dozen miles off on the farm of a relation in the Vale of Yarrow. Every week, however, he came down to have a ramble with Sir Walter over their old haunts—to hear how the pecuniary atmosphere was darkening or brightening; and to read in every face at Abbotsford, that it could never be itself again until circumstances should permit his re-establishment at Kaeside.

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[1] Mr. Archdeacon Singleton.

All this warm and respectful solicitude must have had a preciously soothing influence on the mind of Scott, who may be said to have lived upon love. No man cared less about popular admiration and applause; but for the least chill on the affection of any near and dear to him he had the sensitiveness of a maiden. I cannot forget, in particular, how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh: 'Egad,' said he, 'auld *Pepe*' (this was the children's name for their good friend)—'auld *Pepe's* whistling at his darg. The honest fellow said, a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe's cushion.' In general, during that autumn, I thought Sir Walter enjoyed much his usual spirits; and often, no doubt, he did so. His Diary shows (what perhaps many of his intimates doubted during his lifetime) that, in spite of the dignified equanimity which characterised all his conversation with mankind, he had his full share of the delicate sensibilities, the mysterious ups and downs, the wayward melancholy, the fantastic sunbeams of the poetical temperament. It is only with imaginative minds, in truth, that sorrows of the spirit are enduring. Those he had encountered were veiled from the eye of the world, but they lasted with his life. What a picture have we in his entry about the Runic letters he had carved in the day of young passion on the turf among the grave-stones of St. Andrews! And again, he wrote neither sonnets, nor elegies, nor monodies, nor even an epitaph on his wife;—but what an epitaph is his Diary throughout the year 1826—ay, and down to the close!

There is one entry of that Diary for the period we are leaving, which paints the man in his tenderness, his fortitude, and his happy wisdom:—'*September* 24. Worked in the morning as usual, and sent off the proofs and copy. Something of the black dog still hanging about me; but I will shake him off. I generally affect good spirits in company of my family, whether I am enjoying them or not. It is too severe to sadden the harmless mirth of others by suffering your own causeless melancholy to be seen; and this species of exertion is, like virtue, its own reward; for the good spirits, which are at first simulated, become at length real.'

The first series of Chronicles of the Canongate—(which title supplanted that of *The Canongate Miscellany, or Traditions of the Sanctuary*)—was published early in the winter. The contents were, the Highland Widow, the Two Drovers, and the Surgeon's Daughter—all in their styles excellent, except that the Indian part of the last does not well harmonize with the rest; and certain preliminary chapters which were generally considered as still better than the stories they introduce. The portraiture of Mrs. Murray Keith, under the name of Mrs. Bethune Baliol, and that of Chrystal Croftangry throughout, appear to me unsurpassed in Scott's writings. In the former, I am assured he has mixed up various features of his own beloved mother; and in the latter, there can be no doubt that a good deal was taken from nobody but himself. In fact, the choice of the hero's residence, the original title of the book, and a world of minor circumstances, were suggested by the actual condition and prospects of the author's affairs; for it appears from his Diary, though I have not thought it necessary to quote those entries, that from time to time, between December

1826 and November 1827, he had renewed threatenings of severe treatment from Messrs. Abud and Co.; and, on at least one occasion, he made every preparation for taking shelter in the Sanctuary of Holyroodhouse. Although these people were well aware that at Christmas 1827 a very large dividend would be paid on the Ballantyne estate, they would not understand that their interest, and that of all the creditors, lay in allowing Scott the free use of his time; that by thwarting and harassing him personally, nothing was likely to be achieved but the throwing up of the trust, and the settlement of the insolvent house's affairs on the usual terms of a sequestration; in which case there could be no doubt that he would, on resigning all his assets, be discharged absolutely, with liberty to devote his future exertions to his own sole benefit. The Abuds would understand nothing, but that the very unanimity of the other creditors as to the propriety of being gentle with him, rendered it extremely probable that their harshness might be rewarded by immediate payment of their whole demand. They fancied that the trustees would clear off any one debt, rather than disturb the arrangements generally adopted; they fancied that, in case they laid Sir Walter Scott in prison, there would be some extraordinary burst of feeling in Edinburgh—that private friends would interfere—in short, that in one way or another, they should get hold, without farther delay, of their 'pound of flesh.'—Two or three paragraphs from the Diary will be enough as to this unpleasant subject.

'*October* 31.—Just as I was merrily cutting away among my trees, arrives Mr. Gibson with a very melancholy look, and indeed the news he brought was shocking enough. It seems Mr. Abud, the same who formerly was disposed to disturb me in London, has given positive orders to take out diligence against me for his debt. This breaks all the measures we had resolved on, and prevents the dividend from taking place, by which many poor persons will be great sufferers. For me the alternative will be more painful to my feelings than prejudicial to my interests. To submit to a sequestration, and allow the creditors to take what they can get, will be the inevitable consequence. This will cut short my labour by several years, which I might spend, and spend in vain, in endeavouring to meet their demands. We shall know more on Saturday, and not sooner.—I went to Bowhill with Sir Adam Fergusson to dinner, and maintained as good a countenance in the midst of my perplexities as a man need desire. It is not bravado; I feel firm and resolute.

'*November* 1.—I waked in the night and lay two hours in feverish meditation. This is a tribute to natural feeling. But the air of a fine frosty morning gave me some elasticity of spirit. It is strange that about a week ago I was more dispirited for nothing at all, than I am now for perplexities which set at defiance my conjectures concerning their issue. I suppose that I, the Chronicler of the Canongate, will have to take up my residence in the Sanctuary, unless I prefer the more airy residence of the Calton Jail, or a trip to the Isle of Man. It is to no purpose being angry with Abud or Ahab, or whatever name he delights in. He is seeking his own, and thinks by these harsh measures to render his road to it more speedy.—Sir Adam Fergusson left Bowhill this morning for Dumfriesshire. I returned to Abbotsford to Anne, and told her this unpleasant news. She stood it remarkably well, poor body.

'*November* 2.—I was a little bilious this night—no wonder. Had sundry letters without any power of giving my mind to answer them—one about Gourgaud with his nonsense. I shall not trouble my head more on that score. Well, it is a hard knock on the elbow: I knew I had a life of labour before me, but I was resolved to work steadily: now they have treated me like a recusant turnspit, and put in a red-hot cinder into the wheel alongst with me. But of what use is philosophy—and I have always pretended to a little of a practical character

—if it cannot teach us to do or suffer? The day is glorious, yet I have little will to enjoy it; yet, were a twelvemonth over, I should perhaps smile at what makes me now very serious. Smile! No—that can never be. My present feelings cannot be recollected with cheerfulness; but I may drop a tear of gratitude.

'*November* 3.—Slept in, and lay one hour longer than usual in the morning. I gained an hour's quiet by it, that is much. I feel a little shaken at the result of to-day's post. I am not able to go out. My poor workers wonder that I pass them without a word. I can imagine no alternative but the Sanctuary or the Isle of Man. Both shocking enough. But in Edinburgh I am always on the scene of action, free from uncertainty, and near my poor daughter; so I think I shall prefer it, and thus I rest in unrest. But I will not let this unman me. Our hope, heavenly and earthly, is poorly anchored, if the cable parts upon the stream. I believe in God, who can change evil into good; and I am confident that what befalls us is always ultimately for the best.

'*November* 4.—Put my papers in some order, and prepared for the journey. It is in the style of the Emperors of Abyssinia, who proclaim—Cut down the Kantuffa in the four quarters of the world, for I know not where I am going. Yet, were it not for poor Anne's doleful looks, I would feel firm as a piece of granite. Even the poor dogs seem to fawn on me with anxious meaning, as if there were something going on they could not comprehend. They probably notice the packing of the clothes, and other symptoms of a journey.

'Set off at twelve, firmly resolved in body and mind. Dined at Fushie Bridge. Ah! good Mrs. Wilson, you know not you are like to lose an old customer![1]

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[1] Mrs. Wilson, landlady of the inn at Fushie, one stage from Edinburgh—an old dame of some humour, with whom Sir Walter always had a friendly colloquy in passing. I believe the charm was that she had passed her childhood among the Gipsies of the Border. But her fiery Radicalism latterly was another source of high merriment.

'But when I arrived in Edinburgh at my faithful friend, Mr. Gibson's—lo! the scene had again changed, and a new hare is started,' etc. etc.

The 'new hare' was this. It transpired in the very nick of time, that a suspicion of usury attached to these Israelites without guile, in a transaction with Hurst and Robinson, as to one or more of the bills for which the house of Ballantyne had become responsible. This suspicion, upon investigation, assumed a shape sufficiently tangible to justify Ballantyne's trustees in carrying the point before the Court of Session; but they failed to establish their allegation.[1] The amount was then settled—but how and in what manner was long unknown to Scott. Sir William Forbes, whose banking-house was one of Messrs. Ballantyne's chief creditors, crowned his generous efforts for Scott's relief by privately paying the whole of Abud's demand (nearly £2000) out of his own pocket—ranking as an ordinary creditor for the amount; and taking care at the same time that his old friend should be allowed to believe that the affair had merged quietly in the general measures of the trustees. In fact it was not until some time after Sir William's death, that Sir Walter learned what he had done on this occasion; and I may as well add here, that he himself died in utter ignorance of some services of a like sort, which he owed to the secret liberality of three of his brethren at the Clerk's table—Hector Macdonald Buchanan, Colin Mackenzie, and Sir Robert Dundas.

I ought not to omit, that as soon as Sir Walter's eldest son heard of the Abud business, he left Ireland for Edinburgh; but before he reached his father, the alarm had blown over.

This vision of the real Canongate has drawn me away from the Chronicles of Mr. Croftangry. The scenery of his patrimonial inheritance was sketched from that of Carmichael, the ancient and now deserted mansion of the noble family of Hyndford; but for his strongly Scottish feelings about parting with his *land*, and stern efforts to suppress them, the author had not to go so far afield. Christie Steele's brief character of Croftangry's ancestry, too, appears to suit well all that we have on record concerning his own more immediate progenitors of the stubborn race of Raeburn:—'They werena ill to the poor folk, sir, and that is aye something; they were just decent bien bodies. Ony poor creature that had face to beg got an awmous, and welcome; they that were shamefaced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangry's, and as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them, called in their kain and eat them; gaed to the kirk of a Sunday; bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on.' I hope I shall give no offence by adding, that many things in the character and manners of Mr. Gideon Gray of Middlemas in the Tale of the Surgeon's Daughter, were considered at the time by Sir Walter's neighbours on Tweedside as copied from Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson of Selkirk. 'He was,' says the Chronicler, 'of such reputation in the medical world, that he had been often advised to exchange the village and its meagre circle of practice for Edinburgh. There is no creature in Scotland that works harder and is more poorly requited than the country doctor, unless perhaps it may be his horse. Yet the horse is, and indeed must be, hardy, active, and indefatigable, in spite of a rough coat and indifferent condition; and so you will often find in his master, under a blunt exterior, professional skill and enthusiasm, intelligence, humanity, courage, and science.' A true picture—a portrait from the life, of Scott's hard-riding, benevolent, and sagacious old friend, 'to all the country dear.'

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[1] The Editor entirely disclaims giving any opinion of his own respecting these transactions with Messrs. Abud and Co. He considers it as his business to represent the views which *Sir Walter* took of the affair from time to time; whether these were or were not uniformly correct, he has no means to decide—and indeed no curiosity to inquire.

These Chronicles were not received with exceeding favour at the time; and Sir Walter was a good deal discouraged. Indeed he seems to have been with some difficulty persuaded by Cadell and Ballantyne that it would not do for him to 'lie fallow' as a novelist; and then, when he in compliance with their entreaties began a Second Canongate Series, they were both disappointed with his MS., and told him their opinions so plainly, that his good-nature was sharply tried. The Tales which they disapproved of were those of My Aunt Margaret's Mirror and The Laird's Jock; he consented to lay them aside, and began St. Valentine's Eve, or the Fair Maid of Perth, which from the first pleased his critics. It was in the brief interval occasioned by these misgivings and debates, that his ever elastic mind threw off another charming paper for the Quarterly Review—that on Ornamental Gardening, by way of sequel to the Essay on Planting Waste Lands. Another fruit of his leisure was a sketch of the life of George Bannatyne, the collector of ancient Scottish poetry, for the Club which bears his name.

DIARY—'*Edinburgh*, *November* 6.—Wrought upon an introduction to the notices which have been recovered of George Bannatyne, author or rather transcriber of the famous Repository of Scottish Poetry, generally known by the name of the Bannatyne MS. They are very jejune these same notices—a mere record of matters of business, putting forth and calling in sums of money, and such like. Yet it is a satisfaction to know that this great benefactor to the literature of Scotland had a prosperous life, and enjoyed the pleasures of domestic society, and, in a time peculiarly perilous, lived unmolested and died in quiet.'

He had taken, for that winter, the house No. 6 Shandwick Place, which he occupied by the month during the remainder of his servitude as a Clerk of Session. Very near this house, he was told a few days after he took possession, dwelt the aged mother of his first love—the lady of the *Runic characters*—and he expressed to his friend Mrs. Skene a wish that she should carry him to renew an acquaintance which seems to have been interrupted from the period of his youthful romance. Mrs. Skene complied with his desire, and she tells me that a very painful scene ensued, adding—'I think it highly probable that it was on returning from this call that he committed to writing the verses, *To Time*, by his early favourite, which you have printed in your first volume.'[1] I believe Mrs. Skene will have no doubt on that matter when the following entries from his Diary meet her eye:—

'*November* 7.—Began to settle myself this morning, after the hurry of mind and even of body which I have lately undergone.—I went to make a visit, and fairly softened myself, like an old fool, with recalling old stories, till I was fit for nothing but shedding tears and repeating verses for the whole night. This is sad work. The very grave gives up its dead, and time rolls back thirty years to add to my perplexities. I don't care. I begin to grow case-hardened, and, like a stag turning at bay, my naturally good temper grows fierce and dangerous. Yet what a romance to tell,—and told, I fear, it will one day be. And then my three years of dreaming, and my two years of wakening, will be chronicled, doubtless. But the dead will feel no pain.

'*November* 10.—Wrote out my task and little more. At twelve o'clock I went again to poor Lady —— —— to talk over old stories. I am not clear that it is a right or healthful indulgence to be ripping up old sores, but it seems to give her deep-rooted sorrow words, and that is a mental blood-letting. To me these things are now matter of calm and solemn recollection, never to be forgotten, yet scarce to be remembered with pain.—We go out to Saint Catherine's to-day. I am glad of it, for I would not have these recollections haunt me, and society will put them out of my head.'

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[1] See vol. i. p. 211.

Sir Walter has this entry on reading the *Gazette* of the battle of Navarino :—'*November* 14. We have thumped the Turks very well. But as to the justice of our interference, I will only suppose some Turkish plenipotentiary, with an immense turban and long loose trousers, comes to dictate to us the mode in which we should deal with our refractory liegemen, the Catholics of Ireland. We hesitate to admit his interference, on which the Moslem runs into Cork Bay, or Bantry Bay, alongside of a British squadron, and sends a boat to tow on a fire-ship. A vessel fires on the boat and sinks it. Is there an aggression on the part of those who fired first, or of those whose manœuvres occasioned the firing ?'

A few days afterwards he received a very agreeable piece of intelligence. The King had not forgotten his promise with respect to the poet's second son ; and Lord Dudley, then Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, was a much attached friend from early days—(he had been partly educated at Edinburgh under the roof of Dugald Stewart)—his Lordship had therefore been very well disposed to comply with the royal recommendation. —'*November* 30. The great pleasure of a letter from Lord Dudley, informing me that he has received his Majesty's commands to put down the name of my son Charles for the first vacancy that shall occur in the Foreign Office, and at the same time to acquaint me with his gracious intentions, which were signified in language the most gratifying to me. This makes me really feel light and happy, and most grateful to the kind and gracious sovereign who has always shown, I may say, so much friendship towards me. Would to God *the King's errand might lie in the cadger's gait*, that I might have some better way of showing my feelings than merely by a letter of thanks, or this private memorandum of my gratitude. Public affairs look awkward. The present Ministry are neither Whig nor Tory, and divested of the support of either of the great parties of the state, stand supported by the will of the sovereign alone. This is not constitutional, and though it may be a temporary augmentation of the prince's personal influence, yet it cannot but prove hurtful to the Crown upon the whole, by tending to throw that responsibility on him of which the law has deprived him. I pray to God I may be wrong, but, I think, an attempt to govern *par bascule*, by trimming betwixt the opposite parties, is equally unsafe for the Crown, and detrimental to the country, and cannot do for a long time. That with a neutral Administration, this country, hard ruled at any time, can be long governed, I for one do not believe. God send the good King, to whom I owe so much, as safe and honourable extrication as the circumstances render possible.'—The dissolution of the Goderich Cabinet confirmed very soon these shrewd guesses; and Sir Walter anticipated nothing but good from the Premiership of the Duke of Wellington.

The settlement of Charles Scott was rapidly followed by more than one fortunate incident in Sir Walter's literary and pecuniary history. The first Tales of a Grandfather appeared early in December, and their reception was more rapturous than that of any one of his works since Ivanhoe. He had solved for the first time the problem of narrating history, so as at once to excite and gratify the curiosity of youth, and please and instruct the wisest of mature minds. The popularity of the book has grown with every year that has since elapsed; it is equally prized in the library, the boudoir, the schoolroom, and the nursery; it is adopted as the happiest of manuals, not only in Scotland, but wherever the English tongue is spoken; nay, it is to be seen in the hands of old and young all over the civilized world, and has, I have little doubt, extended the knowledge of Scottish history in quarters where little or no interest had ever before been awakened as to any other parts of that subject, except those immediately connected with Mary Stuart and the Chevalier. This success effectually rebuked the trepidation of the author's bookseller and printer, and inspired the former with new courage as to a step which he had for some time been meditating, and which had given rise to many a long and anxious discussion between him and Sir Walter.

The question as to the property of the Life of Napoleon and Woodstock having now been settled by the arbiter (Lord Newton) in favour of the author, the relative affairs of Sir Walter and the creditors of Constable were so simplified, that the trustee on that sequestrated estate resolved to bring into the market, with the concurrence of Ballantyne's trustees, and without farther delay, a variety of very valuable copyrights. This important sale comprised Scott's novels from Waverley to Quentin Durward inclusive, besides a majority of the shares of the Poetical Works.

Mr. Cadell's family and private friends were extremely desirous that he should purchase part at least of these copyrights; and Sir Walter's were not less so that he should seize this last opportunity of recovering a share in the prime fruits of his genius. The relations by this time established between him and Cadell were those of strict confidence and kindness; and both saw well that the property would be comparatively lost, were it not secured, that thenceforth the whole should be managed as one unbroken concern. It was in the success of an uniform edition of the Waverley Novels, with prefaces and notes by the author, that both anticipated the means of finally extinguishing the debt of Ballantyne and Co.; and, after some demur, the trustees of that house's creditors were wise enough to adopt their views. The result was, that the copyrights exposed to sale for behoof of Constable's creditors were purchased, one half for Sir Walter, the other half for Cadell, at the price of £8500—a sum which was considered large at the moment, but which the London competitors soon afterwards convinced themselves they ought to have outbid.

The Diary says:—'*December* 17.—Sent off the new beginning of the Chronicles to Ballantyne. I hate cancels—they are a double labour. Mr. Cowan, trustee for Constable's creditors, called in the morning by appointment, and we talked about the sale of the copyrights of

Waverley, etc. It is to be hoped the high upset price fixed (£5000) will

> Fright the fuds
> Of the pock-puds.

This speculation may be for good or for evil, but it tends incalculably to increase the value of such copyrights as remain in my own person; and if a handsome and cheap edition of the whole, with notes, can be instituted in conformity with Cadell's plan, it must prove a mine of wealth for my creditors. It is possible, no doubt, that the works may lose their effect on the public mind; but this must be risked, and I think the chances are greatly in our favour. Death (my own, I mean) would improve the property, since an edition with a Life would sell like wildfire. Perhaps those who read this prophecy may shake their heads and say—"Poor fellow, he little thought how he should see the public interest in him and his extinguished, even during his natural existence." It may be so, but I will hope better. This I know, that no literary speculation ever succeeded with me but where my own works were concerned; and that, on the other hand, these have rarely failed.

'*December* 20.—Anent the copyrights—the pock-puds were not frightened by our high price. They came on briskly, four or five bidders abreast, and went on till the lot was knocked down to Cadell at £8500; a very large sum certainly, yet he has been offered profit on it already. The activity of the contest serves to show the value of the property. On the whole, I am greatly pleased with the acquisition.'

Well might the 'pockpuddings'—the English booksellers—rue their timidity on this day; but it was the most lucky one that ever came for Sir Walter Scott's creditors. A dividend of six shillings in the pound was paid at this Christmas on their whole claims. The result of their high-hearted debtor's exertions, between January 1826 and January 1828, was in all very nearly £40,000. No literary biographer, in all likelihood, will ever have such another fact to record. The creditors unanimously passed a vote of thanks for the indefatigable industry which had achieved so much for their behoof.

On returning to Abbotsford at Christmas, after completing these transactions, he says in his Diary :—'My reflections in entering my own gate to-day were of a very different and more pleasing cast, than those with which I left this place about six weeks ago. I was then in doubt whether I should fly my country, or become avowedly bankrupt, and surrender up my library and household furniture, with the liferent of my estate, to sale. A man of the world will say I had better done so. No doubt, had I taken this course at once, I might have employed the money I have made since the insolvency of Constable and Robinson's houses in compounding my debts. But I could not have slept sound, as I now can under the comfortable impression of receiving the thanks of my creditors, and the conscious feeling of discharging my duty as a man of honour and honesty. I see before me a long, tedious, and dark path, but it leads to stainless reputation. If I die in the harrows, as is very likely, I shall die with honour ; if I achieve my task, I shall have the thanks of all concerned, and the approbation of my own conscience. And so, I think, I can fairly face the return of Christmas-day.'

And again, on the 31st December, he says—

'Looking back to the conclusion of 1826, I observe that the last year ended in trouble and sickness, with pressures for the present and gloomy prospects for the future. The sense of a great privation so lately sustained, together with the very doubtful and clouded nature of my private affairs, pressed hard upon my mind. I am now restored in constitution ; and though I am still on troubled waters, yet I am rowing with the tide, and less than the continuation of my exertions of 1827 may, with God's blessing, carry me successfully through 1828, when we may gain a more open sea, if not exactly a safe port. Above all, my children are well. Sophia's situation excites some natural anxiety ; but it is only the accomplishment of the burden imposed on her sex. Walter is happy in the view of his majority, on which matter we have favourable hopes from the Horse-Guards. Anne is well and happy. Charles's entry on life under the highest patronage, and in a line for which, I hope, he is qualified, is about to take place presently.

'For all these great blessings, it becomes me well to be thankful to God, who, in his good time and good pleasure, sends us good as well as evil.'

CHAPTER LXXV

The 'Opus Magnum'—'Religious Discourses, by a Layman'—Letters to George Huntly Gordon, Cadell, and Ballantyne—Heath's Keepsake, etc.—Arniston—Dalhousie—Prisons—Dissolution of Yeomanry Cavalry—The Fair Maid of Perth published.

JAN.—APRIL 1828

WITH the exception of a few weeks occupied by an excursion to London, which business of various sorts had rendered necessary, the year 1828 was spent in the same assiduous labour as 1827. The commercial transaction completed at Christmas cleared the way for two undertakings, which would of themselves have been enough to supply desk-work in abundance; and Sir Walter appears to have scarcely passed a day on which something was not done for them. I allude to Cadell's plan of a new edition of the Poetry, with biographical prefaces; and the still more extensive one of an uniform reprint of the Novels, each to be introduced by an account of the hints on which it had been founded, and illustrated throughout by historical and antiquarian annotations. On this last, commonly mentioned in the Diary as the *Opus Magnum*, Sir Walter bestowed pains commensurate with its importance;—and in the execution of the very delicate task which either scheme imposed, he has certainly displayed such a combination of frankness and modesty as entitles him to a high place in the short list of graceful autobiographers. True dignity is always simple; and perhaps true genius, of the highest class at least, is always humble. These operations took up much time;—yet he laboured hard this year, both as a novelist and a historian. He contributed, moreover, several articles to the Quarterly Review and the Bannatyne Club library; and to the Journal conducted by Mr. Gillies, an excellent Essay on Molière; this last being again a free gift to the Editor.

But the first advertisement of 1828 was of a new order; and the announcement that the Author of Waverley had *Sermons* in the press, was received perhaps with as much incredulity in the clerical world, as could have been excited among them by that of a romance from the Archbishop of Canterbury. A thin octavo volume, entitled 'Religious Discourses by a Layman,' and having 'W. S.' at the foot of a short preface, did, however, issue in the course of the spring, and from the shop, that all might be in perfect keeping, of Mr. Colburn, a bookseller then known almost exclusively as the standing purveyor of what is called 'light reading'—novels of 'fashionable life,' and the like pretty ephemera. I am afraid that the 'Religious Discourses,' too, would, but for the author's name, have had a brief existence; but the history of their composition, besides sufficiently explaining the humility of these tracts in a literary as well as a theological point of view, will, I hope, gratify most of my readers.

It may perhaps be remembered, that Sir Walter's cicerone over Waterloo, in August 1815, was a certain Major Pryse Gordon, then on half-pay and resident at Brussels. The acquaintance, until they met at Sir Frederick Adam's table, had been very slight—nor was it ever carried further; but the Major was exceedingly attentive during Scott's stay, and afterwards took some pains about collecting little reliques of the battle for Abbotsford. One evening the poet supped at his house, and there happened to sit next him the host's eldest son, then a lad of nineteen, whose appearance and situation much interested him. He had been destined for the Church of Scotland, but, as he grew up, a deafness, which had come on him in boyhood, became worse and worse, and at length his friends feared that it must incapacitate him for the clerical function. He had gone to spend the vacation with his father, and Sir Frederick Adam, understanding how he was situated, offered him a temporary appointment as a clerk in the Commissariat, which he hoped to convert into a permanent one, in case the war continued. At the time of Scott's arrival that prospect was wellnigh gone, and the young man's infirmity, his embarrassment, and other things to which his own memorandum makes no allusion, excited the visitor's sympathy. Though there were lion-hunters of no small consequence in the party, he directed most of his talk into the poor clerk's ear-trumpet; and at parting, begged him not to forget that he had a friend on Tweedside.

A couple of years elapsed before he heard anything more of Mr. Gordon, who then sent him his father's little *spolia* of Waterloo, and accompanied them by a letter explaining his situation, and asking advice, in a style which renewed and increased Scott's favourable impression. He had been dismissed from the Commissariat at the general reduction of our establishments, and was now hesitating whether he had better take up again his views as to the Kirk, or turn his eyes towards English orders; and in the meantime he was anxious to find some way of lightening to his parents, by his own industry, the completion of his professional education. There ensued a copious correspondence between him and Scott, who gave him on all points of his case most paternal advice, and accompanied his counsels with offers of pecuniary assistance, of which the young man rarely availed himself. At length he resolved on re-entering the Divinity Class at Aberdeen, and in due time was licensed by the Presbytery there as a Preacher of the Gospel; but though with good connexions, for he was 'sprung of Scotia's gentler blood,' his deafness operated as a serious bar to his obtaining the incumbency of a parish. The provincial Synod pronounced his deafness an insuperable objection, and the case was referred to the General Assembly. That tribunal heard Mr. Gordon's cause maintained by all the skill and eloquence of Mr. Jeffrey, whose good offices had been secured by Scott's intervention, and they overruled the decision of the Presbytery. But Gordon, in the course of the discussion, gathered the conviction, that a man almost literally stone-deaf could *not* discharge some of the highest duties of a parish-priest in a satisfactory manner, and he with honourable firmness declined to take advantage of the judgment of the Supreme Court. Meantime he had been employed, from the failure of John Ballantyne's health downwards, as the transcriber of the Waverley MSS. for the press, in which capacity he displayed every quality that could endear an amanuensis to an author; and when the disasters of 1826 rendered it unnecessary for Scott to have his MS. copied, he exerted himself to procure employment for his young friend in one of the Government offices in London. Being backed by the kindness of the late Duke of Gordon, his story found favour with the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Lushington—and Mr. Gordon was named assistant private secretary to that gentleman. The appointment was temporary, but he so pleased his chief that there was hope of better things by and by.—Such was his situation at Christmas 1827; but that being his first Christmas in London, it was no wonder that he then discovered himself to have somewhat miscalculated about money matters. In a word, he knew not whither to look at the moment for extrication, until he bethought him of the following little incident of his life at Abbotsford.

He was spending the autumn of 1824 there, daily copying the MS. of Redgauntlet, and working at leisure hours on the Catalogue of the Library, when the family observed him to be labouring under some extraordinary depression of mind. It was just then that he had at length obtained the prospect of a Living, and Sir Walter was surprised that this should not have exhilarated him. Gently sounding the trumpet, however, he discovered that the agitation of the question about the deafness had shaken his nerves—his scruples had been roused—his conscience was sensitive,—and he avowed that, though he thought, on the whole, he ought to go through with the business, he could not command his mind so as to prepare a couple of sermons, which, unless he summarily abandoned his object, must be produced on a certain day—then near at hand—before his Presbytery. Sir Walter reminded him that his exercises when on trial for the Probationership had given satisfaction; but nothing he could say was sufficient to re-brace Mr. Gordon's spirits, and he at length exclaimed, with tears, that his pen was powerless,—that he had made fifty attempts, and saw nothing but failure and disgrace before him. Scott answered, 'My good young friend, leave this matter to me—do you work away at the Catalogue, and I'll write for you a couple of sermons that shall pass muster well enough at Aberdeen.' Gordon assented with a sigh; and next morning Sir Walter gave him the MS. of the 'Religious Discourses.' On reflection, Mr. Gordon considered it quite impossible to produce them as his own, and a letter to be quoted immediately will show, that he by and by had written others for himself in a style creditable to his talents, though, from circumstances above explained, he never delivered them at Aberdeen. But the 'Two Discourses' of 1824 had remained in his hands; and it now occurred to him that, if Sir Walter would allow him to dispose of these to some bookseller, they might possibly bring a price that would float him over his little difficulties of Christmas.

Scott consented; and Gordon got more than he had ventured to expect for his MS. But since this matter has been introduced, I must indulge myself with a little retrospect, and give a few specimens of the great author's correspondence with this amiable dependent. The series now before me consists of more than forty letters to Mr. Gordon.

'Edinburgh, 5*th January* 1817.

' . . . I am very sorry your malady continues to distress you; yet while one's eyes are spared to look on the wisdom of former times, we are the less entitled to regret that we hear less of the folly of the present. The Church always presents a safe and respectable asylum, and has many mansions. But in fact, the great art of life, so far as I have been able to observe, consists in fortitude and perseverance. I have rarely seen, that a man who conscientiously devoted himself to the studies and duties of *any* profession, and did not omit to take fair and honourable opportunities of offering himself to notice when such presented themselves, has not at length got forward. The mischance of those who fall behind, though flung upon fortune, more frequently arises from want of skill and perseverance. Life, my young friend, is like a game at cards—our hands are alternately good or bad, and the whole seems at first glance to depend on mere chance. But it is not so, for in the long run the skill of the player predominates over the casualties of the game. Therefore, do not be discouraged with the prospect before you, but ply your studies hard, and qualify yourself to receive fortune when she comes your way. I shall have pleasure at any time in hearing from you, and more especially in seeing you.' . . .

'24*th July* 1818.

'. . . I send you the Travels of Thiodolf.[1] Perhaps you might do well to give a glance over Tytler's Principles of Translation, ere you gird up your loins to the undertaking. If the gods have made you poetical, you should imitate, rather than attempt a literal translation of, the verses interspersed; and, in general, I think both the prose and verse might be improved by compression. If you find the versification a difficult or unpleasant task, I must translate for you such parts of the poetry as may be absolutely necessary for carrying on the story, which will cost an old hack like me very little trouble. I would have you, however, by all means try yourself.' . . .

'14*th October* 1818.

'. . . I am greatly at a loss what could possibly make you think you had given me the slightest offence. If that very erroneous idea arose from my silence and short letters, I must plead both business and laziness, which makes me an indifferent correspondent; but I thought I had explained in my last that which it was needful that you should know. . . .

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[1] A novel by the Baron de la Motte Fouqué.

'I have said nothing on the delicate confidence you have reposed in me. I have not forgotten that I have been young, and must therefore be sincerely interested in those feelings which the best men entertain with most warmth. At the same time, my experience makes me alike an enemy to premature marriage and to distant engagements. The first adds to our individual cares the responsibility for the beloved and helpless pledges of our affection, and the last are liable to the most cruel disappointments. But, my good young friend, if you have settled your affections upon a worthy object, I can only hope that your progress in life will be such as to make you look forward with prudence to a speedy union.' . . .

'12*th June* 1820.

'. . . I am very sorry for your illness, and your unpleasant and uncertain situation, for which, unfortunately, I can give no better consolation than in the worn-out and wearying-out word, patience. What you mention of your private feelings on an interesting subject, is indeed distressing; but assure yourself that scarce one person out of twenty marries his first love, and scarce one out of twenty of the remainder has cause to rejoice at having done so. What we love in those early days is generally rather a fanciful creation of our own than a reality. We build statues of snow, and weep when they melt.' . . .

'12*th April* 1825.

'MY DEAR MR. GORDON—I would have made some additions to your sermon with great pleasure, but it is with even more than great pleasure that I assure you it needs none. It is a most respectable discourse, with good divinity in it, which is always the marrow and bones of a *Concio ad clerum*, and you may pronounce it, *meo periculo*, without the least danger of failure or of unpleasant comparisons. I am not fond of Mr. Irving's species of eloquence, consisting of *outré* flourishes and extravagant metaphors. The eloquence of the pulpit should be of a chaste and dignified character; earnest, but not high-flown and ecstatic, and consisting as much in close reasoning as in elegant expression. It occurs to me as a good topic for more than one discourse,—the manner in which the heresies of the earlier Christian Church are treated in the Acts and the Epistles. It is remarkable, that while the arguments by which they are combated are distinct, clear, and powerful, the inspired writers have not judged it proper to go beyond general expressions, respecting the particular heresies which they combated. If you look closely, there is much reason in this. . . . In general, I would say, that on entering on the clerical profession, were it my case, I should be anxious to take much pains with my sermons, and the studies on which they must be founded. Nothing rewards itself so completely as exercise, whether of the body or mind. We sleep sound, and our waking hours are happy, because they are employed; and a little sense of toil is necessary to the enjoyment of leisure, even when earned by study and sanctioned by the discharge of duty. I think most clergymen diminish their own respectability by falling into indolent habits, and what players call *walking through their part.* You, who have to beat up against an infirmity, and it may be against some unreasonable prejudices, arising from that infirmity, should determine to do the thing not only well, but better than others.' . . .

'*To G. Huntly Gordon, Esq., Treasury, London.*

'*28th December* 1827.

'Dear Gordon—As I have no money to spare at present, I find it necessary to make a sacrifice of my own scruples, to relieve you from serious difficulties. The enclosed will entitle you to deal with any respectable bookseller. You must tell the history in your own way as shortly as possible. All that is necessary to say is, that the discourses were written to oblige a young friend. It is understood my name is not to be put on the title-page, or blazed at full length in the preface. You may trust that to the newspapers.

'Pray, do not think of returning any thanks about this; it is enough that I know it is likely to serve your purpose. But use the funds arising from this unexpected source with prudence, for such fountains do not spring up at every place of the desert.—I am, in haste, ever yours most truly, WALTER SCOTT.'

The reader will, I believe, forgive this retrospect; and be pleased to know that the publication of the sermons answered the purpose intended. Mr. Gordon now occupies a permanent and respectable situation in her Majesty's Stationery Office;[1] and he concludes his communication to me with expressing his feeling that his prosperity 'is all clearly traceable to the kindness of Sir Walter Scott.'

In a letter to me about this affair of the Discourses, Sir Walter says, 'poor Gordon has got my leave to make a *kirk and a mill* of my *Sermons*—heaven save the mark! Help him, if you can, to the water of Pactolus and a swapping thirlage.' The only entries in the Diary, which relate to the business, are the following:—'*December* 28. Huntly Gordon writes me in despair about £180 of debt which he has incurred. He wishes to publish two sermons which I wrote for him when he was taking orders; and he would get little money for them without my name. People may exclaim against the undesired and unwelcome zeal of him who stretched his hands to help the ark over, with the best intentions, and cry sacrilege. And yet they will do me gross injustice, for I would, if called upon, die a martyr for the Christian religion, so completely is (in my poor opinion) its divine origin proved by its beneficial effects on the state of society. Were we but to name the abolition of slavery and polygamy, how much has, in these two words, been granted to mankind in the lessons of our

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[1] He died in London, December 27, 1868, aged 72.

Saviour!—*January* 10, 1828. Huntly Gordon has disposed of the two sermons to the bookseller, Colburn, for £250; well sold I think, and to go forth immediately. I would rather the thing had not gone there, and far rather that it had gone nowhere,—yet hang it, if it makes the poor lad easy, what needs I fret about it? After all, there would be little grace in doing a kind thing, if you did not suffer pain or inconvenience upon the score.'

The next literary entry is this:—'Mr Charles Heath, the engraver, invites me to take charge of a yearly publication called The Keepsake, of which the plates are beyond comparison beautiful, but the letterpress indifferent enough. He proposes £800 a year if I would become editor, and £400 if I would contribute from seventy to one hundred pages. I declined both, but told him I might give him some trifling thing or other. To become the stipendiary editor of a New-Year's-Gift Book is not to be thought of, nor could I agree to work regularly, for any quantity of supply, at such a publication. Even the pecuniary view is not flattering, though Mr. Heath meant it should be so. One hundred of his close printed pages, for which he offers £400, are nearly equal to one volume of a novel. Each novel of three volumes brings £4000, and I remain proprietor of the mine after the first ore is scooped out.' The result of this negotiation with Mr. Heath was, that he received, for £500, the liberty of printing in his Keepsake the long-forgotten juvenile drama of the House of Aspen, with My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, and two other little tales, which had been omitted, at Ballantyne's entreaty, from the second Chronicles of Croftangry. But Sir Walter regretted having meddled in any way with the toyshop of literature, and would never do so again, though repeatedly offered very large sums—nor even when the motive of private regard was added, upon Mr. Allan Cunningham's lending his name to one of these painted bladders.

In the same week that Mr. Heath made his proposition, Sir Walter received another, which he thus disposes of in his Diary:—'I have an invitation from Messrs.

Saunders and Ottley, booksellers, offering me from £1500 to £2000 annually to conduct a journal; but I am their humble servant. I am too indolent to stand to that sort of work, and I must preserve the undisturbed use of my leisure, and possess my soul in quiet. A large income is not my object; I must clear my debts; and that is to be done by writing things of which I can retain the property. Made my excuses accordingly.'

In January 1828, reprints both of the Grandfather's Tales and of the Life of Napoleon were called for; and both so suddenly, that the booksellers would fain have distributed the volumes among various printers in order to catch the demand. Ballantyne heard of this with natural alarm; and Scott, in the case of the Napoleon, conceived that his own literary character was trifled with, as well as his old ally's interests. On receiving James's first appeal—that as to the Grandfather's Stories, he wrote thus:—I need scarcely add, with the desired effect.

'*To Robert Cadell, Esq., Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *3rd January* 1828.

'MY DEAR SIR—I find our friend James Ballantyne is very anxious about printing the new edition of the Tales, which I hope you will allow him to do, unless extreme haste be an extreme object. I need not remind you that we three are like the shipwrecked crew of a vessel, cast upon a desolate island, and fitting up out of the remains of a gallant bark such a cock-boat as may transport us to some more hospitable shore. Therefore, we are bound by the strong tie of common misfortune to help each other, in so far as the claim of self-preservation will permit, and I am happy to think the plank is large enough to float us all.

'Besides my feelings for my own old friend and school-fellow, with whom I have shared good and bad weather for so many years, I must also remember that, as in your own case, his friends have made great exertions to support him in the printing-office, under an implied hope and trust that these publications would take *in ordinary cases* their usual direction. It is true, no engagement was or could be proposed to this effect; but it was a reasonable expectation, which influenced kind and generous men, and I incline to pay every respect to it in my power.

'Messrs. Longman really keep matters a little too quiet for my convenience. The next thing they may tell me is, that Napoleon must go to press instantly to a dozen of printers. I must boot and saddle, off and away at a fortnight's warning. Now this I neither can nor will do. My character as a man of letters is deeply interested in giving a complete revisal of that work, and I wish to have time to do so without being hurried.—Yours very truly,

'W. S.'

The following specimens of his 'skirmishes,' as he used to call them, with Ballantyne, while the Fair Maid of Perth was in hand, are in keeping with this amiable picture:—

'My dear James—I return the proofs of Tales, and send some leaves copy of St. Valentine's. Pray get on with *this* in case we should fall through again. When the press does not follow me, I get on slowly and ill, and put myself in mind of Jamie Balfour, who could run when he could not stand still. We *must* go on or stop altogether. —Yours,' etc. etc.

'I think you are hypercritical in your commentary. I counted the hours with accuracy. In the morning the citizens went to Kinfauns and returned. This puts over the hour of noon, then the dinner-hour. Afterwards, and when the king has had his devotions in private, comes all the scene in the court-yard. The sun sets at half-past five on the 14th February; and if we suppose it to be within an hour of evening, it was surely time for a woman who had a night to put over, to ask where she should sleep. This is the explanation,—apply it as you please to the text; for you who see the doubt can best clear it.—Yours truly,' etc.

'I cannot afford to be merciful to Master Oliver Proudfoot, although I am heartily glad there is any one of the personages sufficiently interesting to make you care whether he lives or dies. But it would cost my cancelling half a volume, and rather than do so, I would, like the valiant Baron of Clackmannan, kill the whole characters, the author, and the printer. Besides, *entre nous*, the resurrection of Athelstane was a botch. It struck me when I was reading Ivanhoe over the other day.

'I value your criticism as much as ever ; but the worst is, my faults are better known to myself than to you. Tell a young beauty that she wears an unbecoming dress, or an ill-fashioned ornament, or speaks too loud, or commits any other mistake which she can correct, and she will do so, if she has sense, and a good opinion of your taste. But tell a fading beauty that her hair is getting gray, her wrinkles apparent, her gait heavy, and that she has no business in a ball-room but to be ranged against the wall as an evergreen, and you will afflict the poor old lady, without rendering her any service. She knows all that better than you. I am sure the old lady in question takes pain enough at her toilette, and gives you, her trusty *suivante*, enough of trouble.—Yours truly,

'W. S.'

These notes to the printer appear to have been written at Abbotsford during the holidays. On his way back to Edinburgh, Sir Walter halts for a Saturday and Sunday at Arniston, and the Diary on the second day says—'Went to Borthwick church with the family, and heard a well-composed, well-delivered, sensible discourse from Mr. Wright.[1] After sermon we looked at the old castle, which made me an old man. The castle was not a bit older for the twenty-five years which had passed away, but the ruins of the visitor are very apparent. To climb up ruinous staircases, to creep through vaults and into dungeons, were not the easy labours but the positive sports of my younger years; but I thought it convenient to attempt no more than the access to the large and beautiful hall, in which, as it is somewhere described, an armed horseman might brandish his lance.[1] This feeling of growing inability is painful to one who boasted, in spite of infirmity, great boldness and dexterity in such feats; the boldness remains, but hand and foot, grip and accuracy of step, have altogether failed me—the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; and so I must retreat into the invalided corps, and tell them of my former exploits, which may very likely pass for lies. We then drove to Dalhousie, where the gallant Earl, who has done so much to distinguish the British name in every quarter of the globe, is repairing the castle of his ancestors, which of yore stood a siege against John of Gaunt. I was his companion at school, where he was as much beloved by his playmates, as he has been ever respected by his companions in arms and the people over whom he had been deputed to exercise the authority of his sovereign. He was always steady, wise, and generous. The old Castle of Dalhousie—*seu potius* Dalwolsey—was mangled by a fellow called, I believe, Douglas, who destroyed, as far as in him lay, its military and baronial character, and roofed it after the fashion of a poor's-house. Burn[2] is now restoring and repairing in the old taste, and, I think, creditably to his own feeling. God bless the roof-tree!

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[1] The Rev. T. Wright, of Borthwick, is the author of various popular works,—'The Morning and Evening Sacrifice,' etc. etc.

'We returned home by the side of the South Esk, where I had the pleasure to see that Robert Dundas[3] is laying out his woods with taste, and managing them with care. His father and uncle took notice of me when I was "a fellow of no mark nor likelihood,"[4] and I am always happy in finding myself in the old oak room at Arniston, where I have drank many a merry bottle, and in the fields where I have seen many a hare killed.'

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[1] See Scott's account of Borthwick Castle in his Prose Miscellanies, vol. vii.

[2] William Burn, Esq., architect, Edinburgh.

[3] R. Dundas of Arniston, Esq., the worthy representative of an illustrious lineage, died at his paternal seat in June 1838.

[4] King Henry IV. Act III. Scene 2.

At the opening of the Session next day, he misses one of his dear old colleagues of the table, Mr. Mackenzie, who had long been the official preses in ordinary of the Writers to the Signet. The Diary has a pithy entry here:—'My good friend Colin Mackenzie proposes to retire from indifferent health. A better man never lived—eager to serve every one—a safeguard over all public business which came through his hands. As Deputy-keeper of the Signet he will be much missed. He had a patience in listening to every one, which is of infinite importance in the management of a public body; for many men care less to gain their point, than they do to play the orator, and be listened to for a certain time. This done, and due quantity of personal consideration being gained, the individual orator is usually satisfied with the reasons of the civil listener, who has suffered him to enjoy his hour of consequence.'

The following passages appear (in various ways) too curious and characteristic to be omitted. He is working hard, alas! too hard—at the Fair Maid of Perth.

'*February* 17.—A hard day of work, being, I think, eight pages[1] before dinner. I cannot, I am sure, tell if it is worth marking down, that yesterday, at dinner-time, I was strangely haunted by what I would call the sense of pre-existence—viz. a confused idea that nothing that passed was said for the first time—that the same topics had been discussed, and the same persons had stated the same opinions on them. It is true there might have been some ground for recollections, considering that three at least of the company were old friends, and had kept much company together; that is, Justice-Clerk, [Lord] Abercromby, and I. But the sensation was so strong as to resemble what is called a *mirage* in the desert, or a calenture on board of ship, when lakes are seen in the desert, and sylvan landscapes in the sea. It was very distressing yesterday, and brought to my mind the fancies of Bishop

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[1] *i.e.* Forty pages of print, or very nearly.

Berkeley about an ideal world. There was a vile sense of want of reality in all I did and said. It made me gloomy and out of spirits, though I flatter myself this was not observed. The bodily feeling which most resembles this unpleasing hallucination is the giddy state which follows profuse bleeding, when one feels as if he were walking on feather-beds and could not find a secure footing. I think the stomach has something to do with it. I drank several glasses of wine, but these only augmented the disorder. I did not find the *in vino veritas* of the philosophers. Something of this insane feeling remains to-day, but a trifle only.

'*February* 20.—Another day of labour, but not so hard. I worked from eight till three with little intermission, but only accomplished four pages.

'A certain Mr. Mackay from Ireland called on me—an active agent, it would seem, about the reform of prisons. He exclaims—justly I doubt not—about the state of our Lock-up House. For myself I have some distrust of the fanaticism even of philanthropy. A good part of it arises in general from mere vanity and love of distinction, gilded over to others and to themselves with some show of benevolent sentiment. The philanthropy of Howard, mingled with his ill-usage of his son, seems to have risen to a pitch of insanity. Yet without such extraordinary men, who call attention to the subject by their own peculiarities, prisons would have remained the same dungeons which they were forty or fifty years ago. I do not, however, see the propriety of making them dandy places of detention. They should be places of punishment, and that can hardly be if men are lodged better, and fed better, than when they are at large. I have never seen a plan for keeping in order these resorts of guilt and misery, without presupposing a superintendence of a kind which might perhaps be exercised, could we turn out upon the watch a guard of angels. But, alas! jailers and turnkeys are rather like angels of a different livery, nor do I see how it is possible to render them otherwise. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* As to reformation, I have no great belief in it, when the ordinary classes of culprits, who are vicious from ignorance or habit, are the subjects of the experiment. "A shave from a broken loaf" is thought as little of by the male set of delinquents as by the fair frail. The state of society now leads to such accumulations of humanity, that we cannot wonder if it ferment and reek like a compost dunghill. Nature intended that population should be diffused over the soil in proportion to its extent. We have accumulated in huge cities and smothering manufactories the numbers which should be spread over the face of a country; and what wonder that they should be corrupted? We have turned healthful and pleasant brooks into morasses and pestiferous lakes,—what wonder the soil should be unhealthy? A great deal, I think, might be done by executing the punishment of *death*, without a chance of escape, in all cases to which it should be found properly applicable; of course these occasions being diminished to one out of twenty to which capital punishment is now assigned. Our ancestors brought the country to order by *kilting* thieves and banditti with strings. So did the French when at Naples, and bandits became for the time unheard of. When once men are taught that a crime of a certain character is connected inseparably with death, the moral habits of a population become altered, and you may in the next age remit the punishment which in this it has been necessary to inflict with stern severity.

'*February* 21.—Last night after dinner I rested from my work, and read the third series of *Sayings and Doings*, which shows great knowledge of life in a certain sphere, and very considerable powers of wit, which somewhat damages the effect of the tragic parts. But Theodore Hook is an able writer, and so much of his work is well said, that it will carry through what is indifferent. I hope the same good fortune for other folks.

'I am watching and waiting till I hit on some quaint and clever mode of extricating, but do not see a glimpse of any one. James B., too, discourages me a good deal by his silence, waiting, I suppose, to be invited to disgorge a full allowance of his critical bile. But he will wait long enough, for I am discouraged enough. Now here is the advantage of Edinburgh. In the country, if a sense of inability once seizes me, it haunts me from morning to night; but in town the time is so occupied and frittered away by official duties and chance occupations, that you have not leisure to play Master Stephen, and be melancholy and gentlemanlike.[1] On the other hand, you never feel in town those spirit-stirring influences—those glances of sunshine that make amends for clouds and mist. The country is said to be the quieter life; not to me, I am sure. In town the business I have to do hardly costs me more thought than just occupies my mind, and I have as much of gossip and lady-like chat as consumes odd hours pleasantly enough. In the country I am thrown entirely on my own resources, and there is no medium betwixt happiness and the reverse.

'*March* 9.—I set about arranging my papers, a task which I always take up with the greatest possible ill-will, and which makes me cruelly nervous. I don't know why it should be so, for I have nothing particularly disagreeable to look at; far from it, I am better than I was at this time last year, my hopes firmer, my health stronger, my affairs bettered and bettering. Yet I feel an inexpressible nervousness in consequence of this employment. The memory, though it retains all that has passed, has closed sternly over it; and this rummaging, like a bucket dropped suddenly into a well, deranges and confuses the ideas which slumbered on the mind. I am nervous, and I am bilious, and, in a word, I am unhappy. This is wrong, very wrong; and it is reasonably to be apprehended that something of serious misfortune may be the deserved punishment of this pusillanimous lowness of spirits. Strange, that one who in most things may be said to have enough of the "care na by," should be subject to such vile weakness!—Drummond Hay, the antiquary and Lyon-herald,[1] came in. I do not know anything which relieves the mind so much from the sullens as trifling discussions about antiquarian *old womanries*. It is like knitting a stocking, diverting the mind without occupying it; or it is like, by Our Lady, a mill-dam, which leads one's thoughts gently and imperceptibly out of the channel in which they are chafing and boiling. To be sure, it is only conducting them to turn a child's mill: what signifies that?—the diversion is a relief though the object is of little importance. I cannot tell what we talked of.

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[1] See Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, Act I. Scene 3.

'*March* 12.—I was sadly worried by the black dog this morning, that vile palpitation of the heart—that *tremor cordis*—that hysterical passion which forces unbidden sighs and tears, and falls upon a contented life like a drop of ink on white paper, which is not the less a stain because it carries no meaning. I wrote three leaves, however, and the story goes on.

'The dissolution of the Yeomanry was the act of the last Ministry. The present did not alter the measure, on account of the expense saved. I am, if not the very oldest Yeoman in Scotland, one of the oldest, and have seen the rise, progress, and now the fall of this very constitutional part of the national force. Its efficacy, on occasions of insurrection, was sufficiently proved in the Radical time. But besides, it kept up a spirit of harmony between the proprietors of land and the occupiers, and made them known to and beloved by each other; and it gave to the young men a sort of military and high-spirited character, which always does honour to a country. The manufacturers are in great glee on this occasion. I wish Parliament, as they have turned the Yeomen adrift somewhat scornfully, may not have occasion to roar them in again.

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[1] W. A. Drummond Hay, Esq. (now consul at Tangier), was at this time the deputy of his cousin the Earl of Kinnoull, hereditary Lord Lyon King at Arms.

The eldrich knight gave up his arms
With many a sorrowful sigh.'

Sir Walter finished his novel by the end of March, and immediately set out for London, where the last budget of proof-sheets reached him. The Fair Maid was, and continues to be highly popular, and though never classed with his performances of the first file, it has undoubtedly several scenes equal to what the best of them can show, and is on the whole a work of brilliant variety and most lively interest. Though the Introduction of 1830 says a good deal on the most original character, that of Connochar, the reader may not be sorry to have one paragraph on that subject from the Diary :—' *December* 5, 1827.—The fellow that swam the Tay, and escaped, would be a good ludicrous character. But I have a mind to try him in the serious line of tragedy. Miss Baillie has made her Ethling a coward by temperament, and a hero when touched by filial affection. Suppose a man's nerves, supported by feelings of honour, or say, by the spur of jealousy, sustaining him against constitutional timidity to a certain point, then suddenly giving way, I think something tragic might be produced. James Ballantyne's criticism is too much moulded upon the general taste of novels to admit (I fear) this species of reasoning. But what can one do ? I am hard up as far as imagination is concerned, yet the world calls for novelty. Well, I'll try my brave coward or cowardly brave man. *Valeat quantum.*'

The most careful critic that has handled this Tale, while he picks many holes in the plot, estimates the characters very highly. Of the glee-maiden, he well says —' Louise is a delightful sketch.—Nothing can be more exquisite than the manner in which her story is partly told, and partly hinted, or than the contrast between her natural and her professional character' ; and after discussing at some length Rothsay, Henbane, Ramorney, etc. etc., he comes to Connochar.

> This character (says Mr. Senior) is perfectly tragic, neither too bad for sympathy, nor so good as to render his calamity revolting; but its great merit is the boldness with which we are called upon to sympathize with a deficiency which is generally the subject of unmitigated scorn. It is impossible not to feel the deepest commiseration for a youth cursed by nature with extreme sensibility both to shame and to fear, suddenly raised from a life of obscurity and peace, to head a confederacy of warlike savages, and forced immediately afterwards to elect, before the eyes of thousands, between a frightful death and an ignominious escape. The philosophy of courage and cowardice is one of the obscurest parts of human nature: partly because the susceptibility of fear is much affected by physical causes, by habit, and by example; and partly because it is a subject as to which men do not readily state the result of their own experience, and when they do state it, are not always implicitly believed. The subject has been further perplexed, in modern times, by the Scandinavian invention of the point of honour;—a doctrine which represents the manifestation, in most cases, of even well-founded apprehension as fatal to all nobility of character;—an opinion so little admitted by the classical world, that Homer has attributed to Hector, and Virgil to Turnus, certainly without supposing them dishonoured, precisely the same conduct of which Sir Walter makes suicide a consequence, without being an expiation. The result of all this has been, that scarcely any modern writers have made the various degrees of courage a source of much variety and discrimination of character. They have given us indeed plenty of fire-eaters and plenty of poltroons; and Shakspeare has painted in Falstaff constitutional intrepidity unsupported by honour; and by far the most usual modification of character among persons of vivid imagination, that in which a quick feeling of honour combats a quick apprehension of danger, a character which is the precise converse of Falstaff's, has been left almost untouched for Scott.

I alluded, in an early part of these Memoirs (vol. ii. p. 86), to a circumstance in Sir Walter's conduct, which it was painful to mention, and added, that in advanced life he himself spoke of it with a deep feeling of contrition. Talking over this character of Connochar, just before the book appeared, he told me the unhappy fate of his brother Daniel, and how he had declined to be present at his funeral, or wear mourning for him. He added—'My secret motive, in this attempt, was to perform a sort of expiation to my poor brother's *manes*. I have now learned to have more tolerance and compassion than I had in those days.' I said he put me in mind of Samuel Johnson's standing bareheaded, in the last year of his life, on the market-place of Uttoxeter, by way of penance for a piece of juvenile irreverence towards his father. 'Well, no matter,' said he; 'perhaps that's not the worst thing in the Doctor's story.'[1]

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[1] See Croker's *Boswell*, octavo edition, vol. v. p. 288.

CHAPTER LXXVI

Journey to London—Charlecote-Hall—Holland-House—Chiswick—Kensington Palace—Richmond Park—Gill's-Hill—Boyd—Sotheby—Coleridge—Sir T. Acland—Bishop Copplestone—Mrs. Arkwright—Lord Sidmouth—Lord Alvanley—Northcote—Haydon—Chantrey and Cunningham—Anecdotes—Letters to Mr. Terry, Mrs. Lockhart, and Sir Alexander Wood—Death of Sir William Forbes—Reviews of Hajji Baba in England, and Davy's Salmonia—Anne of Geierstein begun—Second series of the Grandfather's Tales published.

APRIL—DEC. 1828

SIR WALTER remained at this time six weeks in London. His eldest son's regiment was stationed at Hampton Court; the second had recently taken his desk at the Foreign Office, and was living at his sister's in the Regent's Park; he had thus looked forward to a happy meeting with all his family—but he encountered scenes of sickness and distress, in consequence of which I saw but little of him in general society. I shall cull a few notices from his private volume, which, however, he now opened much less regularly than formerly, and which offers a total blank for the latter half of the year 1828. In coming up to town, he diverged a little for the sake of seeing the interesting subject of the first of these extracts.

'*April* 8.—Learning from Washington Irving's description of Stratford, that the hall of Sir Thomas Lucy, the Justice who rendered Warwickshire too hot for Shakspeare, was still extant, we went in quest of it.

'Charlecote is in high preservation, and inhabited by Mr. Lucy, descendant of the worshipful Sir Thomas. The Hall is about three hundred years old—a brick mansion, with a gate-house in advance. It is surrounded by venerable oaks, realizing the imagery which Shakspeare loved to dwell upon; rich verdant pastures extend on every side, and numerous herds of deer were reposing in the shade. All showed that the Lucy family had retained their "land and beeves." While we were surveying the antlered old hall, with its painted glass and family pictures, Mr. Lucy came to welcome us in person, and to show the house, with the collection of paintings, which seems valuable.

'He told me the park from which Shakspeare stole the buck was not that which surrounds Charlecote, but belonged to a mansion at some distance, where Sir Thomas Lucy resided at the time of the trespass. The tradition went, that they hid the buck in a barn, part of which was standing a few years ago, but now totally decayed. This park no longer belongs to the Lucys. The house bears no marks of decay, but seems the abode of ease and opulence. There were some fine old books, and I was told of many more which were not in order. How odd, if a folio Shakspeare should be found amongst them. Our early breakfast did not permit taking advantage of an excellent repast offered by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Lucy, the last a lively Welshwoman. This visit gave me great pleasure; it really brought Justice Shallow freshly before my eyes;—the *luces* "which do become an old coat well,"[1] were not more plainly portrayed in his own armorials in the hall window, than was his person in my mind's eye. There is a picture shown as that of the old Sir Thomas, but Mr. Lucy conjectures it represents his son. There were three descents of the same name of Thomas. The portrait hath the "eye severe, and beard of formal cut," which fill up with judicial austerity the otherwise social physiognomy of the worshipful presence, with his "fair round belly, with good capon lined."[1]

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[1] Henry IV. Act III. Scene 2.

'*Regent's Park, April* 17.—Made up my journal, which had fallen something behind. In this phantasmagorial place, the objects of the day come and depart like shadows. Went to Murray's, where I met Mr. Jacob, the great economist. He is proposing a mode of supporting the poor, by compelling them to labour under a species of military discipline. I see no objection to it, only it will make a rebellion to a certainty; and the tribes of Jacob will cut Jacob's throat.[2]

'Canning's conversion from popular opinions was strangely brought round. While he was studying in the Temple, and rather entertaining revolutionary opinions, Godwin sent to say that he was coming to breakfast with him, to speak on a subject of the highest importance. Canning knew little of him, but received his visit, and learned to his astonishment, that in expectation of a new order of things, the English Jacobins designed to place him, Canning, at the head of their revolution. He was much struck, and asked time to think what course he should take—and having thought the matter over, he went to Mr. Pitt, and made the Anti-Jacobin confession of faith, in which he persevered until ——. Canning himself mentioned this to Sir W. Knighton upon occasion of giving a place in the Charter-house of some ten pounds a year to Godwin's brother. He could scarce do less for one who had offered him the dictator's curule chair.

'Dined with Rogers with all my own family, and met Sharp, Lord John Russell, Jekyll, and others. The conversation flagged as usual, and jokes were fired like minute-guns, producing an effect not much less melancholy. A wit should always have an atmosphere congenial to him, otherwise he will not shine.

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[1] As You Like It, Act I. Scene 7.

[2] Mr. Jacob published about this time some tracts concerning the Poor Colonies instituted by the King of the Netherlands; and they had marked influence in promoting the scheme of granting small *allotments* of land, on easy terms to our cottagers; a scheme which, under the superintendence of Lord Braybroke and other noblemen and gentlemen in various districts of England, appears to have been attended with most beneficent results.

'*April* 18.—Breakfasted at Hampstead with Joanna Baillie, and found that gifted person extremely well, and in the display of all her native knowledge of character and benevolence. I would give as much to have a capital picture of her as for any portrait in the world. Dined with the Dean of Chester, Dr. Philpotts—

> Where all above us was a solemn row
> Of priests and deacons—so were all below.[1]

There were the amiable Bishop of London,[2] Copplestone, whom I remember the first man at Oxford, now Bishop of Llandaff, and Dean of St. Paul's (strongly intelligent), and other dignitaries, of whom I knew less. It was a very pleasant day—the wigs against the wits for a guinea, in point of conversation. Anne looked queer, and much disposed to laugh, at finding herself placed betwixt two prelates in black petticoats.

'*April* 19.—Breakfasted with Sir George Phillips. Had his receipt against the blossoms being injured by frost. It consists in watering them plentifully before sunrise. This is like the mode of thawing beef. We had a pleasant morning, much the better that Morritt was with us. Dined with Sir Robert Inglis, and met Sir Thomas Acland, my old and kind friend. I was happy to see him. He may be considered now as the head of the religious party in the House of Commons—a powerful body, which Wilberforce long commanded. It is a difficult situation; for the adaptation of religious motives to earthly policy is apt—among the infinite delusions of the human heart—to be a snare. But I could confide much in Sir T. Acland's honour and integrity. Bishop

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[1] Crabbe's Tale of 'The Dumb Orators.'

[2] Dr. Howley, raised in 1828 to the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

Bloomfield of Chester,[1] one of the most learned prelates of the Church, also dined.

'*April* 22.—Sophia left this to take down poor Johnnie to Brighton. I fear—I fear—but we must hope the best. Anne went with her sister.

'Lockhart and I dined with Sotheby, where we met a large party, the orator of which was that extraordinary man Coleridge. After eating a hearty dinner, during which he spoke not a word, he began a most learned harangue on the Samothracian Mysteries, which he regards as affording the germ of all tales about fairies past, present, and to come. He then diverged to Homer, whose Iliad he considered as a collection of poems by different authors, at different times, during a century. Morritt, a zealous worshipper of the old bard, was incensed at a system which would turn him into a polytheist, gave battle with keenness, and was joined by Sotheby. Mr. Coleridge behaved with the utmost complaisance and temper, but relaxed not from his exertions. "Zounds, I was never so bethumped with words." Morritt's impatience must have cost him an extra sixpenceworth of snuff.

'*April* 23.—Dined at Lady Davy's with Lord and Lady Lansdowne and several other fine folks—my keys were sent to Bramah's with my desk, so I have not had the means of putting down matters regularly for several days. But who cares for the whipp'd cream of London society?

'*April* 24.—Spent the day in rectifying a road bill which drew a turnpike road through all the Darnicker's cottages, and a good field of my own. I got it put to rights. I was in some apprehension of being obliged to address the Committee. I did not fear them, for I suppose they are no wiser or better in their capacity of legislators than I find them every day at dinner. But I feared for my reputation. They would have expected something better than the occasion demanded, or the individual could produce, and there would have been a failure. We had one or two persons at home in great wretchedness to dinner. I was not able to make any fight, and the evening went off as heavily as any I ever spent in the course of my life.

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[1] Translated to the See of London in 1828.

'*April* 26.—We dined at Richardson's with the two Chief-Barons of England[1] and Scotland,[2]—odd enough, the one being a Scotsman and the other an Englishman—far the pleasantest day we have had. I suppose I am partial, but I think the lawyers beat the bishops, and the bishops beat the wits.

'*April* 26.—This morning I went to meet a remarkable man, Mr. Boyd of the house of Boyd, Benfield, and Co., which broke for a very large sum at the beginning of the war. Benfield went to the devil, I believe. Boyd, a man of very different stamp, went over to Paris to look after some large claims which his house had on the French Government. They were such as, it seems, they could not disavow, however they might be disposed to do so. But they used every effort, by foul means and fair, to induce Mr. Boyd to depart. He was reduced to poverty; he was thrown into prison; and the most flattering prospects were, on the other hand, held out to him if he would compromise his claims. His answer was uniform. It was the property, he said, of his creditors, and he would die ere he resigned it. His distresses were so great, that a subscription was made amongst his Scottish friends, to which I was a contributor, through the request of poor Will Erskine. After the peace of Paris the money was restored; and, faithful to the last, Boyd laid the whole at his creditors' disposal; stating, at the same time, that he was penniless, unless they consented to allow him a moderate sum in name of percentage, in consideration of twenty years of exile, poverty, and danger, all of which evils he might have escaped by surrendering their rights. Will it be believed that a muck-worm was base enough to refuse his consent to this deduction, alleging he had promised to his father, on his deathbed, never to compromise this debt? The wretch, however, was overpowered by the execrations of all around him, and concurred, with others, in setting apart for Mr. Boyd a sum of £40,000 or £50,000 out of half a million. This is a man to whom statues should be erected, and pilgrims should go to see him. He is good-looking, but old and infirm. Bright dark eyes and eyebrows contrast with his snowy hair, and all his features mark vigour of principle and resolution.

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[1] Sir William Alexander.

[2] Sir Samuel Shepherd.

'*April* 30.—We have Mr. Adolphus, and his father,[1] the celebrated lawyer, to breakfast, and I was greatly delighted with the information of the latter. A barrister of extended practice, if he has any talents at all, is the best companion in the world. Dined with Lord Alvanley, and met Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Marquis and Marchioness of Worcester, etc. Lord Alvanley's wit made this party very pleasant, as well as the kind reception of my friends the Misses Arden.

'*May* 1.—Breakfasted with Lord and Lady Francis Gower, and enjoyed the splendid treat of hearing Mrs. Arkwright sing her own music, which is of the highest order;—no forced vagaries of the voice, no caprices of tone, but all telling upon and increasing the feeling the words require. This is "marrying music to immortal verse."[2] Most people place them on separate maintenance.[3]

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[1] The elder Mr. Adolphus distinguished himself early in life by his History of the Reign of George III.

[2] Milton's L'Allegro, v. 137.

[3] Among other songs Mrs. Arkwright (see *ante*, p. 149) delighted Sir Walter with her own set of—

'Farewell! farewell!—The voice you hear
Has left its last soft tone with you:
Its next must join the seaward cheer,
And shout among the shouting crew,' etc.

'*May* 2.—I breakfasted with a Mr. ——, and narrowly escaped Mr. Irving the celebrated preacher. The two ladies of his house seemed devoted to his opinions, and quoted him at every word. Mr. —— himself made some apologies for the Millennium. He is a neat antiquary, who thinks he ought to have been a man of letters, and that his genius has been misdirected in turning towards the law. I endeavoured to combat this idea, which his handsome house and fine family should have checked. Compare his dwelling, his comforts, with poor Tom Campbell's.

'*May* 5.—Breakfasted with Haydon, and sat for my head. I hope this artist is on his legs again. The King has given him a lift, by buying his clever picture of the Mock Election in the King's Bench prison, to which he is adding a second part, representing the chairing of the Member at the moment it was interrupted by the entry of the guards. Haydon was once a great admirer and companion of the champions of the Cockney school, and is now disposed to renounce them and their opinions. To this kind of conversation I did not give much way. A painter should have nothing to do with politics. He is certainly a clever fellow, but too enthusiastic, which, however, distress seems to have cured in some degree. His wife, a pretty woman, looked happy to see me, and that is something. Yet it was very little I could do to help them.[1]

'*May* 8.—Dined with Mrs. Alexander of Balloch-

He was sitting by me, at some distance from the lady, and whispered as she closed—'Capital words—whose are they?—Byron's I suppose, but I don't remember them.' He was astonished when I told him that they were his own in The Pirate. He seemed pleased at the moment, but said next minute—'You have distressed me—if memory goes, all is up with me, for that was always my strong point.'

[1] Sir Walter had shortly before been one of the contributors to a subscription for Mr. Haydon. The imprisonment from which this subscription relieved the artist produced, I need scarcely say, the picture mentioned in the Diary.

myle :—Lord and Lady Meath, who were kind to us in Ireland, and a Scottish party, pleasant from having the broad accents and honest thoughts of my native land. A large circle in the evening. A gentleman came up to me and asked, "If I had seen the Casket, a curious work, the most beautiful, the most highly ornamented,—and then the editor or editress—a female so interesting,—might he ask a very great favour?" and out he pulled a piece of this picnic. I was really angry, and said, for a subscription he might command me,—for a contributor—No. This may be misrepresented, but I care not. Suppose this patron of the Muses gives five guineas to his distressed lady, he will think he does a great deal, yet he takes fifty from me with the calmest air in the world; for the communication is worth that if it be worth anything. There is no equalizing in the proposal.

'*May* 9.—Grounds of Foote's farce of the Cozeners. Lady —— ——. A certain Mrs. Phipps audaciously set up in a fashionable quarter of the town as a person through whose influence, properly propitiated, favours and situations of importance might certainly be obtained—always for a consideration. She cheated many people, and maintained the trick for months. One trick was to get the equipages of Lord North, and other persons of importance, to halt before her door, as if their owners were within. With respect to most of them, this was effected by bribing the drivers. But a gentleman who watched her closely, observed that Charles J. Fox actually left his carriage and went into the house, and this more than once. He was then, it must be noticed, in the Ministry. When Mrs. Phipps was blown up, this circumstance was recollected as deserving explanation, which Fox readily gave at Brookes's and elsewhere. It seems Mrs. Phipps had the art to persuade him that she had the disposal of what was then called a *hyæna*, that is, an heiress—an immense Jamaica heiress, in whom she was willing to give or sell her interest to Charles Fox. Without having perfect confidence in the obliging proposal, the great statesman thought the thing worth looking after, and became so earnest in it, that Mrs. Phipps was desirous to back out for fear of discovery. With this view she made confession one fine morning, with many professions of the deepest feelings, that the hyæna had proved a frail monster, and given birth to a girl or boy—no matter which. Even this did not make Charles quit chase of the hyæna. He intimated that if the cash was plenty and certain, the circumstance might be overlooked. Mrs. Phipps had nothing for it but to double the disgusting dose. "The poor child," she said, "was unfortunately of a mixed colour, somewhat tinged with the blood of Africa; no doubt Mr. Fox was himself very dark, and the circumstance might not draw attention," etc. etc. This singular anecdote was touched upon by Foote, and is the cause of introducing the negress into the Cozeners, though no express allusion to Charles Fox was admitted. Lady —— tells me that, in her youth, the laugh was universal so soon as the black woman appeared. It is one of the numerous hits that will be lost to posterity.

'This day, at the request of Sir William Knighton, I sat to Northcote, who is to introduce himself in the same piece in the act of painting me, like some pictures of the Venetian school. The artist is an old man, low in stature, and bent with years—fourscore at least. But the eye is quick and the countenance noble. A pleasant companion, familiar with recollections of Sir Joshua, Samuel Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, etc. His account of the last confirms all that we have heard of his oddities.

'*May* 11.—Another long sitting to the old Wizard Northcote. He really resembles an animated mummy. Dined with his Majesty in a very private party, five or six only being present. I was received most kindly, as usual. It is impossible to conceive a more friendly manner than that his Majesty used towards me. I spoke to Sir William Knighton about the dedication of the collected novels, and he says it will be highly well taken.[1]

'*May* 17.—A day of busy idleness. Richardson came and breakfasted with me, like a good fellow. Then I went to Mr. Chantrey.[1] Thereafter about twelve o'clock, I went to breakfast the second at Lady Shelley's, where there was a great morning party. A young lady[2] begged a lock of my hair, which was not worth refusing. I stipulated for a kiss, which I was permitted to take. From this I went to the Duke of Wellington, who gave me some hints or rather details. Afterwards I drove out to Chiswick, where I had never been before. A numerous and gay party were assembled to walk and enjoy the beauties of that Palladian dome. The place and highly ornamented gardens belonging to it resemble a picture of Watteau. There is some affectation in the picture, but in the *ensemble* the original looked very well. The Duke of Devonshire received every one with the best possible manners. The scene was dignified by the presence of an immense elephant, who, under charge of a groom, wandered up and down, giving an air of Asiatic pageantry to the entertainment. I was never before sensible of the dignity which largeness of size and freedom of movement give to this otherwise very ugly animal. As I was to dine at Holland House, I did not partake in the magnificent repast which was offered to us, and took myself off about five o'clock. I contrived to make a demi-toilette at Holland House, rather than drive all the way to London. Rogers came to the dinner, which was very entertaining. Lady Holland pressed us to stay all night, which we did accordingly.

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[1] The *Magnum Opus* was dedicated to King George IV.

'*May* 18.—The freshness of the air, the singing of the birds, the beautiful aspect of nature, the size of the venerable trees, gave me altogether a delightful feeling this morning. It seemed there was pleasure even in living and breathing without anything else. We (*i.e.* Rogers and I) wandered into a green lane, bordered with fine trees, which might have been twenty miles from a town. It will be a great pity when this ancient house must come down and give way to rows and crescents. It is not that Holland House is fine as a building,—on the contrary it has a tumble-down look; and although decorated with the bastard Gothic of James I.'s time, the front is heavy. But it resembles many respectable matrons, who having been absolutely ugly during youth, acquire by age an air of dignity. But one is chiefly affected by the air of deep seclusion which is spread around the domain.

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[1] Sir F. Chantrey was at this time executing his *second* bust of Sir Walter—that ordered by Sir Robert Peel, and which is now at Draycote. The reader will find more of this in a subsequent page.

[2] Miss Shelley—now the Honourable Mrs. George Edgecumbe.

'*May* 19.—Dined by command with the Duchess of Kent. I was very kindly recognised by Prince Leopold—and presented to the little Princess Victoria—I hope they will change her name—the heir-apparent to the crown as things now stand. How strange that so large and fine a family as that of his late Majesty should have died off, or decayed into old age, with so few descendants. Prince George of Cumberland is, they say, a fine boy about nine years old—a bit of a Pickle. This little lady is educating with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, "You are heir of England." I suspect, if we could dissect the little heart, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal family—the Duchess herself very pleasing and affable in her manners. I sat by Mr. Spring Rice, a very agreeable man. There were also Charles Wynn and his lady—and the evening, for a court evening, went agreeably off. I am commanded for two days by Prince Leopold, but will send excuses.

'*May* 24.—This day dined at Richmond Park with Lord Sidmouth. Before dinner his Lordship showed me letters which passed between his father, Dr. Addington, and the great Lord Chatham. There was much of that familiar friendship which arises, and must arise between an invalid, the head of an invalid family, and their medical adviser, supposing the last to be a wise and well-bred man. The character of Lord Chatham's handwriting is strong and bold, and his expressions short and manly. There are intimations of his partiality for William, whose health seems to have been precarious during boyhood. He talks of William imitating him in all he did, and calling for ale because his father was recommended to drink it. "If I should smoke," he said, "William would instantly call for a pipe"; and, he wisely infers, "I must take care what I do." The letters of the late William Pitt are of great curiosity; but as, like all real letters of business, they only *allude* to matters with which his correspondent is well acquainted, and do not enter into details, they would require an ample commentary. I hope Lord Sidmouth will supply this, and have urged it as much as I can. I think, though I hate letters, and abominate interference, I will write to him on this subject. Here I met my old and much esteemed friend, Lord Stowell, looking very frail and even comatose. *Quantum mutatus!* He was one of the pleasantest men I ever knew.[1]

'Respecting the letters, I picked up from those of Pitt that he was always extremely desirous of peace with France, and even reckoned upon it at a moment when he ought to have despaired. I suspect this false view of the state of France (for such it was) which induced the British Minister to look for peace when there was no chance of it, damped his ardour in maintaining the war. He wanted the lofty ideas of his father—you read it in his handwriting, great statesman as he was. I saw a letter or two of Burke's, in which there is an *épanchement de cœur* not visible in those of Pitt, who writes like a Premier to his colleague. Burke was under the strange hallucination that his son, who predeceased him, was a man of greater talents than himself. On the contrary, he had little talent, and no nerve. On moving some resolutions in favour of the Catholics, which were ill-received by the House of Commons, young Burke actually ran away, which an Orangeman compared to a cross-reading in the newspapers. "Yesterday the Catholic resolutions were moved, etc.—but the pistol missing fire, the villains ran off!!"

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[1] Sir William Scott, Lord Stowell, died 28th January 1836, aged 90.

'*May* 25.—After a morning of letter-writing, leave-taking, papers destroying, and God knows what trumpery, Sophia and I set out for Hampton Court, carrying with us the following lions and lionesses—Samuel Rogers, Tom Moore, Wordsworth, with wife and daughter. We were very kindly and properly received by Walter and his wife, and had a very pleasant day. At parting, Rogers gave me a gold-mounted pair of glasses, which I will not part with in a hurry. I really like S. R., and have always found him most friendly.'

This is the last London entry; but I must mention two circumstances that occurred during that visit. Breakfasting one morning with Allan Cunningham, and commending one of his publications, he looked round the table, and said—'What are you going to make of all these boys, Allan?' 'I ask that question often of my own heart,' said Allan, 'and I cannot answer it.' 'What does the eldest point to?' 'The callant would fain be a soldier, Sir Walter—and I have a half promise of a commission in the king's army for him; but I wish rather he could go to India, for there the pay is a maintenance, and one does not need interest at every step to get on.' Scott dropped the subject, but went an hour afterwards to Lord Melville (who was now President of the Board of Control), and begged a cadetship for young Cunningham. Lord Melville promised to enquire if he had one at his disposal, in which case he would gladly serve the son of honest Allan; but the point being thus left doubtful, Scott, meeting Mr. John Loch, one of the East-India Directors, at dinner the same evening, at Lord Stafford's, applied to him, and received an immediate assent. On reaching home at night, he found a note from Lord Melville, intimating that he had enquired, and was happy in complying with his request. Next morning, Sir Walter appeared at Sir F. Chantrey's breakfast-table, and greeted the sculptor (who is a brother of the angle) with—'I suppose it has sometimes happened to you to catch one trout (which was all you thought of) with the fly, and another with the bobber. I have done so, and I think I shall land them both. Don't you think Cunningham would like very well to have cadetships for two of those fine lads?' 'To be sure he would,' said Chantrey, 'and if you'll secure the commissions, I'll make the outfit easy.' Great was the joy in Allan's household on this double good news; but I should add, that before the thing was done he had to thank another benefactor. Lord Melville, after all, went out of the Board of Control before he had been able to fulfil his promise; but his successor, Lord Ellenborough, on hearing the circumstances of the case, desired Cunningham to set his mind at rest; and both his young men are now prospering in the India service.

Another friend's private affairs occupied more unpleasantly much of Scott's attention during this residence in London. He learned, shortly after his arrival, that misfortunes (as foreseen by himself in May 1825) had gathered over the management of the Adelphi Theatre.[1] The following letter has been selected from among several on the same painful subject.

'*To Daniel Terry, Esq., Boulogne-sur-Mer.*

'LONDON, LOCKHART'S, *April* 15, 1828.

'MY DEAR TERRY—I received with sincere distress your most melancholy letter. Certainly want of candour with one's friends is blameable, and procrastination in circumstances of embarrassment is highly unwise. But they bring such a fearful chastisement on the party who commits them, that he may justly expect, not the reproaches, but the sympathy and compassion of his friends; at least of all such whose conscience charges them with errors of their own. For my part, I feel as little title, as God knows I have wish, to make any reflections on the matter, more than are connected with the most sincere regret on your own account. The sum at which I stand noted in the schedule is of no consequence in the now more favourable condition of my affairs, and the loss to me personally is the less, that I always considered £200 of the same as belonging to my godson; but he is young, and may not miss the loss when he comes to be fitted out for the voyage of life; we must hope the best. I told your solicitor that I desired he would consider me as a friend of yours, desirous to take as a creditor the measures which seemed best to forward your interest. It might be inconvenient to me were I called upon to make up such instalments of the price of the theatre as are unpaid; but of this, I suppose, there can be no great danger. Pray let me know as soon as you can, how this stands. I think you are quite right to stand to the worst, and that your retiring was an injudicious measure which cannot be too soon retraced, *coute que coute.* I am at present in London with Lockhart, who, as well as my daughter, are in deep sorrow for what has happened, as they, as well as I on their account, consider themselves as deeply obliged to Mrs. Terry's kindness, as well as from regard to you. These hard times must seem still harder while you are in a foreign country. I am not, you know, so wealthy as I have been, but £20 or £30 are heartily at your service if you will let me know how the remittance can reach you. It does not seem to me that an arrangement with your creditors will be difficult; but for God's sake do not temporize and undertake burdens which you cannot discharge, and which will only lead to new difficulties.

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[1] See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 250.

'As to your views about an engagement at Edinburgh I doubt much, though an occasional visit would probably succeed. My countrymen, taken in their general capacity, are not people to have recourse to in adverse circumstances. John Bull is a better beast in misfortune. Your objections to an American trip are quite satisfactory, unless the success of your solicitor's measures should in part remove them, when it may be considered as a *pis-aller.* As to Walter, there can be no difficulty in procuring his admission to the Edinburgh Academy, and if he could be settled with his grandfather, or under his eye, as to domestic accommodation, I would willingly take care of his schooling, and look after him when I am in town. I shall be anxious, indeed, till I hear that you are once more restored to the unrestrained use of your talents; for I am sensible how dreadfully annoying must be your present situation, which leaves so much time for melancholy retrospection without any opportunity of exertion. Yet this state, like others, must be endured with patience: the furiously impatient horse only plunges himself deeper in the slough, as our old hunting excursions may have taught us. In general, the human mind is strong in proportion to the internal energy which it possesses. Evil fortune is as transient as good, and if the endangered ship is still manned by a sturdy and willing crew, why then

> Up and rig a jury foremast,
> She rights, she rights, boys; wear off shore.

This was the system I argued upon in my late distresses; and, therefore, I strongly recommend it to you. I beg my kindest compliments to Mrs. Terry, and I hope better days may come. I shall be here till the beginning of May; therefore we may meet; believe me very truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.'

On the afternoon of the 28th of May, Sir Walter started for the north, but could not resist going out of his way to see the spot where 'Mr. William Weare, who dwelt in Lyon's Inn,' was murdered. His Diary says:—

'Our elegant researches carried us out of the highroad and through a labyrinth of intricate lanes, which seem made on purpose to afford strangers the full benefit of a dark night and a drunk driver, in order to visit Gill's Hill, in Hertfordshire, famous for the murder of Mr. Weare. The place has the strongest title to the description of Wordsworth:—

> A merry spot, 'tis said, in days of yore;
> But something ails it now—the place is curst.

The principal part of the house has been destroyed, and only the kitchen remains standing. The garden has been dismantled, though a few laurels and flowering-shrubs, run wild, continue to mark the spot. The fatal pond is now only a green swamp, but so near the house that one cannot conceive how it was ever chosen as a place of temporary concealment for the murdered body. Indeed the whole history of the murder, and the scenes which ensued, are strange pictures of desperate and short-sighted wickedness. The feasting—the singing—the murderer, with his hands still bloody, hanging round the neck of one of the females the watch-chain of the murdered man—argue the utmost apathy. Even Probart, the most frightened of the party, fled no farther for relief than to the brandy bottle, and is found in the very lane, nay, at the very spot of the murder, seeking for the weapon, and exposing himself to the view of the passengers. Another singular mark of stupid audacity was their venturing to wear the clothes of their victim. There was a want of foresight in the whole arrangements of the deed, and the attempts to conceal it, which a professed robber would not have exhibited. There was just one shade of redeeming character about a business so brutal, perpetrated by men above the very lowest rank of life: it was the mixture of revenge, which afforded some relief to the circumstances of treachery and premeditation. But Weare was a cheat,[1] and had no doubt pillaged Thurtell, who therefore deemed he might take greater liberties with him than with others. The dirt of the present habitation equalled its wretched desolation, and a truculent-looking hag, who showed us the place, and received half-a-crown, looked not unlike the natural inmate of such a mansion. She hinted as much herself, saying the landlord had dismantled the place, because no respectable person would live there. She seems to live entirely alone, and fears no ghosts, she says. One thing about this tragedy was never explained. It is said that Weare, as is the habit of such men, always carried about his person, and between his flannel waiscoat and shirt, a sum of ready money, equal to £1500 or £2000. No such money was ever recovered, and as the sum divided by Thurtell among his accomplices was only about £20, he must, in slang phrase, have *bucketed his palls.*

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[1] Weare, Thurtell, and all the rest, were professed gamblers. See *ante*, p. 20.

'*May* 29.—We travelled from Alconbury Hill to Ferry Bridge, upwards of a hundred miles, amid all the beauties of flourish and verdure which spring awakens at her first approach in the midland counties of England, but without any variety, save those of the season's making. I do believe this great north road is the dullest in the world, as well as the most convenient for the travellers. The skeleton at Barnby Moor has deserted his gibbet, and that is the only change I recollect.

'*Rokeby*, *May* 30.—We left Ferry Bridge at seven, and reached this place at past three. A mile from the house we met Morritt, looking for us. I had great pleasure in finding myself at Rokeby, and recollecting a hundred passages of past time. Morritt looks well and easy in his mind, which I am delighted to see. He is now one of my oldest, and, I believe, one of my most sincere friends;—a man unequalled in the mixture of sound good sense, high literary cultivation, and the kindest and sweetest temper that ever graced a human bosom. His nieces are much attached to him, and are deserving and elegant, as well as beautiful young women. What there is in our partiality to female beauty that commands a species of temperate homage from the aged, as well as ecstatic admiration from the young, I cannot conceive; but it is certain that a very large portion of some other amiable quality is too little to counterbalance the absolute want of this advantage. I, to whom beauty is, and shall henceforward be, a picture, still look upon it with the quiet devotion of an old worshipper, who no longer offers incense on the shrine, but peaceably presents his inch of taper, taking special care in doing so not to burn his own fingers. Nothing in life can be more ludicrous or contemptible than an old man aping the passions of his youth.

'Talking of youth, there was a certain professor at Cambridge, who used to keep sketches of all the lads who, from their conduct at college, seemed to bid fair for distinction in life. He showed them one day to an old shrewd sarcastic master of arts, who looked over the collection, and then observed—" A promising nest of eggs : what a pity the great part will turn out addle ! " And so they do :—looking round amongst the young men, one sees to all appearances fine flourish—but it ripens not.

'*May* 31.—I have finished Napier's War in the Peninsula.[1] It is written in the spirit of a Liberal, but the narrative is distinct and clear. He has, however, given a bad sample of accuracy in the case of Lord Strangford, where his pointed affirmation has been as pointedly repelled. It is evident he would require probing. His defence of Moore is spirited and well argued, though it is evident he defends the statesman as much as the general. As a *Liberal* and a military man, Napier finds it difficult to steer his course. The former character calls on him to plead for the insurgent Spaniards ; the latter induces him to palliate the cruelties of the French. Good-even to him until next volume, which I shall long to see. This was a day of pleasure, and nothing else.'

Next night Sir Walter rested at Carlisle. 'A sad place,' says the Diary, 'in my domestic remembrances, since here I married my poor Charlotte. She is gone, and I am following—faster, perhaps, than I wot of. It is something to have lived and loved ; and our poor children are so hopeful and affectionate, that it chastens the sadness attending the thoughts of our separation. . . . My books being finished, I lighted on an odd volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, a work in which, as in a pawnbroker's shop, much of real curiosity and value are stowed away amid the frippery and trumpery of those reverend old gentlewomen who were the regular correspondents of Mr. Urban.'

His companion wrote thus a day or two afterwards to her sister:[1]—'Early in the morning before we started, papa took me with him to the Cathedral. This he had often done before; but he said he must stand once more on the spot where he married poor mamma. After that we went to the Castle, where a new showman went through the old trick of pointing out Fergus MacIvor's *very* dungeon. Peveril said—"Indeed?—are you quite sure, sir?" And on being told there could be no doubt, was troubled with a fit of coughing, which ended in a laugh. The man seemed exceeding indignant; so when papa moved on, I whispered who it was. I wish you had seen the man's start, and how he stared and bowed as he parted from us; and then rammed his keys into his pocket, and went off at a hand-gallop to warn the rest of the garrison. But the carriage was ready, and we escaped a row.'

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[1] The first volume of Colonel Napier's work had recently been published.

They reached Abbotsford that night, and a day or two afterwards Edinburgh; where Sir Walter was greeted with the satisfactory intelligence, that his plans as to the '*opus magnum*' had been considered at a meeting of his trustees, and finally approved *in toto*. As the scheme inferred a large outlay on drawings and engravings, and otherwise, this decision had been looked for with much anxiety by him and Mr. Cadell. He says—'I trust it will answer; yet who can warrant the continuance of popularity? Old Nattali Corri, who entered into many projects, and could never set the sails of a windmill to catch the *aura popularis*, used to say he believed that, were he to turn baker, it would put bread out of fashion. I have had the better luck to dress my sails to every wind; and so blow on, good wind, and spin round, whirligig.' The *Corri* here alluded to was an unfortunate adventurer, who, among many other wild schemes, tried to set up an Italian Opera at Edinburgh.

The Diary for the next month records the usual meeting at Blair-Adam, but nothing worth quoting, that was done or said, except, perhaps, these two scraps—

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[1] I copy from a letter which has no date, so that I cannot be quite sure of this being the halt at Carlisle it refers to. I once witnessed a scene almost exactly the same at Stirling Castle, where an old soldier called Sir Walter's attention to the 'very dungeon' of Roderick Dhu.

'*Salutation of two old Scottish Lairds*—"Ye're maist obedient hummil servant, Tannachy-Tulloch."—"Your nain man, Kilspindie."

'*Hereditary descent in the Highlands.*—A clergyman showed John Thomson the island of Inchmachome, on the Port of Monteith, and pointed out the boatman as a remarkable person, the representative of the hereditary gardeners of the Earls of Monteith, while these Earls existed. His son, a puggish boy, follows up the theme—"Feyther, when Donald MacCorkindale dees, will not the family be extinct?"—*Father*—"No; I believe there is a man in Balquhidder who takes up the *succession*."'

During the remainder of this year, as I already mentioned, Sir Walter never opened his 'locked book.' Whether in Edinburgh or the country, his life was such, that he describes himself, in several letters, as having become 'a writing automaton.' He had completed, by Christmas, the Second Series of Tales on Scottish History, and made considerable progress in another novel—Anne of Geierstein: he had also drawn up for the Quarterly Review his article on Mr. Morier's Hajji Baba in England; and that delightful one on Sir Humphrey Davy's *Salmonia*—which, like those on Planting and Gardening, abounds in sweet episodes of personal reminiscence: And, whenever he had not proof-sheets to press him, his hours were bestowed on the *opus magnum.*

A few extracts from his correspondence may supply in part this blank in the Diary. Several of them touch on the affairs of Mr. Terry, whose *stamina* were not sufficient to resist the stroke of misfortune. He had a paralytic seizure, very shortly after the ruin of his theatre was made public. One, addressed to a dear and early friend, Sir Alexander Wood, was written on the death of his brother-in-law, Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo—the same modest, gentle, and high-spirited man with whose history Sir Walter's had (as the Diary of 1826 tells) been very remarkably intertwined.

'*To John Lockhart, Esq., Regent's Park.*

'Abbotsford, *July* 14, 1828.

'My dear L.—I wrote myself blind and sick last week about * * * *[1] God forgive me for having thought it possible that a schoolmaster should be out and out a rational being. I have a letter from Terry—but written by his poor wife—his former one was sadly scrawled. I hope he may yet get better—but I suspect the shot has gone near the heart.

O what a world of worlds were it,
Would sorrow, pain, and sickness spare it,
And aye a rowth roast-beef and claret,
Syne wha would starve ?

'If it be true that Longman and Co. have offered £1000 for a history of Ireland, Scotland must stand at fifty per cent discount, for they lately offered me £500 for one of the latter country, which of course I declined. I have also had Murray's request to do some biography for his new undertaking.[2] But I really can't think of any Life I could easily do, excepting Queen Mary's ; and that I decidedly would not do, because my opinion, in point of fact, is contrary both to the popular feeling and to my own. I see, by the by, that your Life of Burns is going to press again, and therefore send you a few letters which may be of use to you. In one of them (to that singular old curmudgeon, Lady Winifred Constable) you will see he plays high Jacobite, and, on that account, it is curious ; though I imagine his Jacobitism, like my own, belonged to the fancy rather than the reason. He was, however, a great Pittite down to a certain period. There were some passing stupid verses in the papers, attacking and defending his satire on a certain preacher, whom he termed "an unco calf." In one of them occurred these lines in vituperation of the adversary—

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[1] These letters, chiefly addressed to Sir Walter's excellent friend, James Heywood Markland, Esq. (Editor of the Chester Mysteries), were on a delicate subject connected with the incipient arrangements of King's College, London.

[2] Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street was at this time projecting his *Family Library*, one of the many imitations of Constable's last scheme.

A Whig, I guess. But Rab's a Tory,
An gies us mony a funny story.

'This was in 1787.—Ever yours,
'WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To Robert Cadell, Esq., Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, 4*th October* 1828.

'MY DEAR SIR—We were equally gratified and surprised by the arrival of the superb time-piece with which you have ornamented our halls. There are grand discussions where it is to be put, and we are only agreed upon one point, that it is one of the handsomest things of the kind we ever saw, and that we are under great obligations to the kind donor. On my part, I shall never look on it without recollecting that the employment of my time is a matter of consequence to you, as well as myself.[1]

'I send you two letters, of which copies will be requisite for the *magnum opus*. They must be copied separately. I wish you would learn from Mr. Walter Dickson, with my best respects, the maiden name of Mrs. Goldie, and the proper way in which she ought to be designated. Another point of information I wish to have is, concerning the establishment of the King's beadsmen or blue-gowns. Such should occur in any account of the Chapel-Royal, to which they were an appendage, but I have looked into Arnott and Maitland, without being able to find anything. My friend, Dr. Lee, will know at once where this is to be sought for.

'Here is a question. Burns in his poetry repeatedly states the idea of his becoming a beggar—these passages I have. But there is a remarkable one in some of his *prose*, stating with much spirit the qualifications he possessed for the character. I have looked till I am sick, through all the letters of his which I have seen, and cannot find this. Do you know any amateur of the Ayrshire Bard who can point it out? It will save time, which is precious to me.[1]

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[1] The allusion is to a clock in the style of Louis Quatorze, now in the drawing-room at Abbotsford.

'J. B. has given me such a dash of criticism, that I have laid by the Maid of the Mist for a few days. But I am working hard, meanwhile, at the illustrations; so no time is lost.—Yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To Mrs. Lockhart, Brighton.*

'ABBOTSFORD, 24*th October* 1828.

'MY DEAR SOPHIA—I write to you rather than to the poor Terrys, on the subject of their plans, which appear to me to require reconsideration, as I have not leisure so to modify my expressions as to avoid grating upon feelings which may be sore enough already. But if I advise I must be plain. The plan of a cottage in this neighbourhood is quite visionary. London or its vicinity is the best place for a limited income, because you can get everything you want without taking a pennyweight more of it than you have occasion for. In the country (with us at least) if you want a basin of milk every day, you must keep a cow—if you want a bunch of straw, you must have a farm. But what is still worse, it seems to me that such a plan would remove Terry out of his natural sphere of action. It is no easy matter, at any rate, to retreat from the practice of an art to the investigation of its theory; but common sense says, that if there is one branch of literature which has a chance of success for our friend, it must be that relating to the drama. Dramatic works, whether designed for the stage or the closet,—dramatic biography (an article in which the public is always interested)—dramatic criticism—these can all be conducted with best advantage in London,—or, rather, they can be conducted nowhere else. In coming down to Scotland, therefore, Terry would be leaving a position in which, should he prove able to exert himself and find the public favourable, he might possibly do as much for his family as he could by his profession. But then he will require to be in book-shops and publishing-houses, and living among those up to the current of public opinion. And although poor Terry's spirits might not at first be up to this exertion, he should remember that the power of doing things easily is only to be acquired by resolution and habit, and if he really could give heart and mind to literature in any considerable degree, I can't see how, amidst so many Bijoux, and Albums, and Souvenirs—not to mention daily papers, critics, censors, and so forth—I cannot see how he could fail to make £200 or £300 a year. In Edinburgh there is nothing of this kind going forwards, positively nothing. Since Constable's fall, all exertion is ended in the Gude Town in the publishing business, excepting what I may not long be able to carry on.

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[1] These queries all point to the annotation of The Antiquary.

'We have had little Walter Terry with us. He is a nice boy. I have got him sent to the New Academy in Edinburgh, and hope he will do well. Indeed, I have good hopes as to them all; but the prospect of success must remain, first, with the restoration of Terry to the power of thought and labour, a matter which is in God's hand; and, secondly, on the choice he shall make of a new sphere of occupation. On these events no mortal can have influence, unless so far as Mrs. Terry may be able to exert over him that degree of power which mind certainly possesses over body.

'Our worthy old aunt, Lady Raeburn, is gone, and I am now the eldest living person of my father's family. My old friend, Sir William Forbes, is extremely ill,—dying, I fear; and the winter seems to approach with more than usual gloom. We are well here, however, and send love to Lockhart and the babies. I want to see L. much, and hope he may make a run down at Christmas.

'You will take notice, that all the advice I venture to offer to the Terrys is according as matters now stand.[1] Indeed, I think he is better now, than when struggling against a losing concern, turning worse every day. With health I have little doubt he may do well yet, and without it what can any one do? Poor Rose,—he too seems to be very badly; and so end, if I lose him, wit, talent, frolic beyond the bounds of sobriety, all united with an admirable heart and feelings.

'Besides all other objections to Terry's plan, the poor invalid would be most uncomfortable here. As my guest, it was another thing; but without power to entertain the better sort of folk, and liable from his profession to the prejudices of our middling people, without means too of moving about, he must, while we are not at Abbotsford, be an absolute hermit. Besides, health may be restored so as to let him act again—regimen and quiet living do much in such cases—and he should not rashly throw up professional connexions. If they be bent on settling in Scotland, a small house in Edinburgh would be much better than the idea of residing here.

'I have been delighted with your views of coming back to Chiefswood next summer,—but had you not better defer that for another year? Here is plenty of room for you all—plenty of beef and mutton—plenty of books for L., and he should have the little parlour (the monkey-room, as Morritt has christened it) inviolate—and he and I move on easily without interrupting each other. Pray think of all this, and believe that, separated as I am so much from you both and the grandchildren, the more I can see of you all while I have eyes left to see you with, the greater will be my pleasure. I am turning a terrible fixture with rheumatism, and go about little but in the carriage, and round the doors. A change of market-days,—but seams will slit, and elbows will out.

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[1] Mr. Terry died in London on the 22nd June 1829. His widow, to whom these Memoirs have owed many of their materials, is now (1837) married to Mr. Charles Richardson of Tulse Hill, the author of the well-known Dictionary of the English Language, etc.

My general health is excellent.—I am always, dearest Sophia, your affectionate father, WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To Sir Alexander Wood, etc. etc. etc., Colinton House, Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *Oct.* 28, 1828.

'MY DEAR SIR ALEXANDER—Your letter brought me the afflicting intelligence of the death of our early and beloved friend Sir William. I had little else to expect, from the state of health in which he was when I last saw him, but that circumstance does not diminish the pain with which I now reflect that I shall never see him more. He was a man who, from his habits, could not be intimately known to many, although everything which he did partook of that high feeling and generosity which belongs perhaps to a better age than that we live in. In him I feel I have sustained a loss which no after-years of my life can fill up to me. Our early friendship none knew better than you; and you also well know that if I look back to the gay and happy hours of youth, they must be filled with recollections of our departed friend. In the whole course of life our friendship has been uninterrupted as his kindness has been unwearied. Even the last time I saw him (so changed from what I knew him) he came to town when he was fitter to have kept his room, merely because he could be of service to some affairs of mine. It is most melancholy to reflect that the life of a man whose principles were so excellent, and his heart so affectionate, should have, in the midst of external prosperity, been darkened, and I fear, I may say, shortened, by domestic affliction. But "those whom He loveth, He chasteneth";[1] and the o'er-seeing Providence, whose ways are as just and kind as they are inscrutable, has given us, in the fate of our dear friend, an example that we must look to a better world for the reward of sound religion, active patriotism, and extended benevolence. I need not write more to you on this subject; you must feel the loss more keenly than any one. But there is another and a better world, in which, I trust in God, those who have loved each other in this transitory scene, may meet and recognise the friends of youth, and companions of more advanced years.

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[1] Hebrews xii. 6.

'I beg my kindest compliments and sincere expressions of sympathy to Lady Wood, and to any of the sorrowing family who may be gratified by the interest of one of their father's oldest friends and most afflicted survivors.

'God bless you, my dear Wood! and I am sure you will believe me yours in sorrow as in gladness,

'Walter Scott.'

'*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Brighton.*

'*October* 30, 1828.

'Dear John—I have a sad affliction in the death of poor Sir William Forbes. You loved him well, I know, but it is impossible that you should enter into all my feelings on this occasion. My heart bleeds for his children. God help all!

'Your scruples about doing an epitome of the Life of Boney, for the Family Library that is to be, are a great deal over delicate. My book in nine thick volumes can never fill the place which our friend Murray wants you to fill, and which, if you don't, some one else will, right soon. Moreover, you took much pains in helping me when I was beginning my task, which I afterwards greatly regretted that Constable had no means of remunerating, as no doubt he intended, when you were giving him so much good advice in laying down his grand plans about the Miscellany. By all means do what the Emperor asks. He is what Emperor Nap. was not, much a gentleman, and, knowing our footing in all things, would not have proposed anything that ought to have excited scruples on your side. Alas, poor Crafty! Do you remember his exultation when my Boney affair was first proposed? Good God! I see him as he then was at this moment—

how he swelled and rolled and reddened, and outblarneyed all blarney! Well, so be it. I hope

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.[1]

But he has cost me many a toilsome dreary day, and drearier night, and will cost me more yet.

'I am getting very unlocomotive—something like an old cabinet that looks well enough in its own corner, but will scarce bear wheeling about even to be dusted. But my work has been advancing gaily, or at least rapidly nevertheless, all this harvest. Master Littlejohn will soon have three more tomes in his hand, and the Swiss story too will be ready early in the year. I shall send you Vol. I. with wee Johnnie's affair. Fat James, as usual, has bored and bothered me with his criticisms, many of which, however, may have turned to good. At first my not having been in Switzerland was a devil of a poser for him—but had I not the honour of an intimate personal acquaintance with every pass in the Highlands; and if that were not enough, had I not seen pictures and prints *galore?* I told him I supposed he was becoming a geologist, and afraid of my misrepresenting the *strata* of some rock on which I had to perch my Maid of the Mist, but that he should be too good a Christian to join those humbugging sages, confound them, who are all tarred with the same stick as Mr. Whiston—

Who proved as sure as God's in Glo'ster,
That Moses was a grand impostor;[2]

and that at any rate I had no mind to rival the accuracy of the traveller, I forget who, that begins his chapter on Athens with a disquisition on the *formation* of the Acropolis Rock. Mademoiselle de Geierstein is now, however, in a fair way—I mean of being married and a' the lave o't, and I of having her ladyship off my hands. I have also twined off a world of not bad balaam in the way of notes, etc. for my Magnum, which if we could but manage the artists decently, might soon be afloat, and will, I do think, do wonders for my extrication. I have no other news to trouble you with. It is possible the Quarterly may be quite right to take the Anti-Catholic line so strongly ; but I greatly doubt the prudence of the thing, for I am convinced the question must and will be carried very soon, whoever may or may not be Minister ; and as to the Duke of Wellington, my faith is constant, that there is no other man living who can work out the salvation of this country. I take some credit to myself for having foreseen his greatness, before many would believe him to be anything out of the ordinary line of clever officers. He is such a man as Europe has not seen since Julius Cæsar ; and if Spain had had the brains to make him king, that country might have been one of the first of the world before his death.—Ever affectionately yours, WALTER SCOTT.'

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[1] Macbeth.

[2] Swift.

Of the same date was the following letter, addressed to the projector of a work entitled 'The Courser's Manual.'[1] He had asked Sir Walter for a contribution ; and received the ancient Scottish ditty of '*Auld Heck*' :—

'DEAR SIR—I have loved the sport of coursing so well, and pursued it so keenly for several years, that I would with pleasure have done anything in my power to add to your collection on the subject ; but I have long laid aside the amusement, and still longer renounced the poetical pen, which ought to have celebrated it ; and I could only send you the laments of an old man, and the enumeration of the number of horses and dogs which have been long laid under the sod. I cannot, indeed, complain with the old huntsman, that—

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[1] This work, though ultimately published under the name of another editor, was projected and arranged by the late Rev. Mr. Barnard of Brantinghamthorpe in Yorkshire ; whose undertaking had no doubt been introduced to Sir Walter's notice by his father-in-law, Mr. Archdeacon Wrangham. That elegant scholar had visited Abbotsford with some of his family about this period. He has since embalmed in pathetic verse the memory of Barnard, whose skill in rural sports by no means interfered with his graceful devotion to literature, or his pious assiduity in the labours of his profession. The reader will find his virtues and accomplishments affectionately recorded in the learned and interesting preface (p. 30) to a Translation of Arrian's Cynegeticus 'by a Graduate of Medicine' : London, quarto, 1831.

No one now,
Dwells in the hall of Ivor ;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead,
And I the sole survivor ;[1]

but I have exchanged my whip for a walking-stick, my smart hack has dwindled into a Zetland shelty, and my two brace of greyhounds into a pair of terriers. Instead of entering on such melancholy topics, I judge it better to send you an Elegy on 'Bonny Heck,' an old Scottish poem, of very considerable merit in the eyes of those who understand the dialect.

'The elegy itself turns upon a circumstance which, when I kept greyhounds, I felt a considerable alloy to the sport ; I mean, the necessity of despatching the instruments and partakers of our amusement, when they begin to make up, by cunning, for the deficiency of youthful vigour. A greyhound is often termed an inferior species of the canine race, in point of sagacity ; and in the eyes of an accomplished sportsman it is desirable they should be so, since they are valued for their spirit, not their address. Accordingly, they are seldom admitted to the rank of personal favourites. I have had such greyhounds, however, and they possessed as large a share of intelligence, attachment, and sagacity, as any other species of dog that I ever saw. In such cases, it becomes difficult or impossible to execute the doom upon the antiquated greyhound, so coolly recommended by Dame Juliana Berners :—

And when he comes to that yere,
Have him to the tannere,
For the best whelp ever bitch had
At nine years is full bad.

Modern sportsmen anticipate the doom by three years at least.

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[1] Wordsworth.

'I cannot help adding to the 'Last Words of Bonny Heck,' a sporting anecdote, said to have happened in Fife, and not far from the residence of that famous greyhound, which may serve to show in what regard the rules of fair play between hound and hare are held by Scottish sportsmen. There was a coursing club, once upon a time, which met at Balchristy, in the Province, or, as it is popularly called, the Kingdom of Fife. The members were elderly social men, whom a very moderate allowance of sport served as an introduction to a hearty dinner and jolly evening. Now, there had her seat on the ground where they usually met, a certain large stout hare, who seemed made on purpose to entertain these moderate sportsmen. She usually gave the amusement of three or four turns, as soon as she was put up,—a sure sign of a strong hare, when practised by any beyond the age of a leveret,—then stretched out in great style, and after affording the gentlemen an easy canter of a mile or two, threw out the dogs by passing through a particular gap in an inclosure. This sport the same hare gave to the same party for one or two seasons, and it was just enough to afford the worthy members of the club a sufficient reason to be alleged to their wives, or others whom it might concern, for passing the day in the public-house. At length, a fellow who attended the hunt nefariously thrust his plaid, or great-coat, into the gap I mentioned, and poor puss, her retreat being thus cut off, was, in the language of the dying Desdemona, "basely — basely murdered." The sport of the Balchristy club seemed to end with this famous hare. They either found no hares, or such as afforded only a halloo and a squeak, or such, finally, as gave them farther runs than they had pleasure of following. The spirit of the meeting died away, and at length it was altogether given up.

'The publican was, of course, the party most especially affected by the discontinuance of the club, and regarded, it may be supposed, with no complacency, the person who had prevented the hare from escaping, and even his memory. One day, a gentleman asked him what was become of such a one, naming the obnoxious individual. "He is dead, sir," answered mine host, with an angry scowl, "and his soul kens this day whether the hare of Balchristy got fair play or not." WALTER SCOTT.'

Resuming his journal at the close of the year, he says —'Having omitted to carry on my Diary for two or three days, I lost heart to make it up, and left it unfilled for many a month and day. During this period nothing has happened worth particular notice :—the same occupations, — the same amusements, — the same occasional alternations of spirits, gay or depressed, — the same absence, for the most part, of all sensible or rational cause for the one or the other. I half grieve to take up my pen, and doubt if it is worth my while to record such an infinite quantity of nothing.'

CHAPTER LXXVII

Visit to Clydesdale—John Greenshields, sculptor—Letter to Lord Elgin—The Westport Murders—Execution of Burke—Letter to Miss Edgeworth—Ballantyne's Hypochondria—Roman Catholic Emancipation carried—Edinburgh Petition, etc.—Deaths of Lord Buchan, Mr. Terry, and Mr. Shortrede—Rev. Edward Irving—Anne of Geierstein published—Issue of the 'Opus Magnum' begun—Its success—Nervous attack—Hæmorrhages—Reviewals on Ancient Scottish History, and Pitcairn's Trials—Third Series of Tales of a Grandfather, and first volume of the Scottish History in Lardner's Cyclopædia, published—Death and Epitaph of Thomas Purdie.

1829

Sir Walter having expressed a wish to consult me about some of his affairs, I went down to Abbotsford at Christmas, and found him apparently well in health (except that he suffered from rheumatism), and enjoying the society as usual of the Fergussons, with the welcome addition of Mr. Morritt and Sir James Stuart of Allanbank—a gentleman whose masterly pencil had often been employed on subjects from his poetry and novels, and whose conversation on art (like that of Sir George Beaumont and Mr. Scrope), being devoid of professional pedantries and jealousies, was always particularly delightful to him. One snowy morning, he gave us sheets of Anne of Geierstein, extending to, I think, about a volume and a half; and we read them together in the library, while he worked in the adjoining room, and occasionally dropped in upon us to hear how we were pleased. All were highly gratified with those vivid and picturesque pages, and both Morritt and Stuart, being familiar with the scenery of Switzerland, could not sufficiently express their astonishment at the felicity with which he had divined its peculiar character, and outdone, by the force of imagination, all the efforts of a thousand actual tourists. Such approbation was of course very acceptable. I had seldom seen him more gently and tranquilly happy.

Among other topics connected with his favourite studies, Sir James Stuart had much to say on the merits and prospects of a remarkable man (well known to myself), who had recently occupied general attention in the North. I allude to the late John Greenshields, a stonemason, who at the age of twenty-eight began to attempt the art of sculpture, and after a few years of solitary devotion to this new pursuit, had produced a statue of the Duke of York, which formed at this time a popular exhibition in Edinburgh. Greenshields was the son of a small farmer, who managed also a ferry-boat, on my elder brother's estate in Lanarkshire; and I could increase the interest with which both Sir James and Sir Walter had examined the statue, by bearing testimony to the purity and modesty of his character and manners. Another eminent lover of art, who had been especially gratified by Greenshields' work, was the Earl of Elgin. Just at this time, as it happened, the sculptor had been invited to spend a day or two at his Lordship's seat in Fife; but learning that Sir Walter was about to visit Clydesdale, Greenshields would not lose the chance of being presented to him on his native spot, and left Broomhall without having finished the inspection of Lord Elgin's marbles. His Lordship addressed a long and interesting letter to Sir Walter, in which he mentioned this circumstance, and besought him, after having talked with the aspirant, and ascertained his own private views and feelings, to communicate his opinion as to the course which might most advantageously be pursued for the encouragement and development of his abilities.

Sir Walter went in the middle of January to Milton-Lockhart; there saw the sculptor in the paternal cottage, and was delighted with him and some of the works he had on hand, particularly a statue of George IV. Greenshields then walked with us for several hours by the river-side, and among the woods. His conversation was easy and manly, and many sagacious remarks on life, as well as art, lost nothing to the poet's ear by being delivered in an accent almost as broad and unsophisticated as Tom Purdie's. John had a keen sense of humour, and his enjoyment of Sir Walter's lectures on planting, and jokes on everything, was rich. He had exactly that way of drawing his lips into a grim involuntary whistle, when a sly thing occurred, which the author of Rob Roy assigns to Andrew Fairservice. After he left us, Scott said—'There is much about that man that reminds me of Burns.' On reaching Edinburgh, he wrote as follows:—

'*To the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin, etc. etc.,*
Broomhall, Fife.

'EDINBURGH, 20*th January* 1829.

'MY DEAR LORD—I wish I were able to pay in better value the debt which I have contracted with your Lordship, by being the unconscious means of depriving you of Mr. Greenshields sooner than had been meant. It is a complicated obligation, since I owe a much greater debt to Greenshields for depriving him of an invaluable opportunity of receiving the advice, and profiting by the opinions of one whose taste for the arts is strong by nature, and has been so highly cultivated. If it were not that he may again have an opportunity to make up for that which he has lost, I would call the loss irreparable.

'My own acquaintance with art is so very small, that I almost hesitate to obey your Lordship in giving an opinion. But I think I never saw a more successful exertion of a young artist than the King's statue, which, though the sculptor had only an indifferent print to work by, seems to me a very happy likeness. The position (as if in act of receiving some person whom his Majesty delighted to honour) has equal ease and felicity, and conveys an idea of grace and courtesy, and even kindness, mixed with dignity, which, as he never saw the original, I was surprised to find mingled in such judicious proportions. The difficulties of a modern military or court dress are manfully combated; and I think the whole thing purely conceived. In a word, it is a work of great promise.

'I may speak with more confidence of the artist than of the figure. Mr. Greenshields seems to me to be one of those remarkable men who must be distinguished in one way or other. He showed during my conversation with him sound sense on all subjects, and considerable information on such as occupied his mind. His habits, I understand, are perfectly steady and regular. His manners are modest and plain, without being clownish or rude; and he has all the good-breeding which nature can teach. Above all, I had occasion to remark that he had a generous and manly disposition—above feeling little slights, or acts of illiberality. Having to mention some very reasonable request of his which had been refused by an individual, he immediately, as if to obliterate the unfavourable impression, hastened to mention several previous instances of kindness which the same individual had shown to him. His mind seems to be too much bent upon fame, to have room for love of money, and his passion for the arts seems to be unfeignedly sincere.

'The important question of how he is to direct his efforts, must depend on the advice of his friends, and I know no one so capable of directing him as your Lordship. At the same time, I obey your commands, by throwing together in haste the observations which follow.

'Like all heaven-born geniuses, he is ignorant of the rules which have been adopted by artists before him, and has never seen the *chefs-d'œuvre* of classical time. Such men having done so much without education, are sometimes apt either to despise it, or to feel so much mortification at seeing how far short their efforts fall of excellence, that they resign their art in despair. I do think and hope, however, that the sanguine and the modest are so well mixed in this man's temper, that he will study the best models with the hope of improvement, and will be bold, as Spencer says, without being too bold. But opportunity of such study is wanting, and that can only be had in London. To London, therefore, he should be sent if possible. In addition to the above, I must remark, that Mr. G. is not master of the art of tempering his clay, and other mechanical matters relating to his profession. These he should apply to without delay, and it would probably be best, having little time to lose, that he should for a while lay the chisel aside, and employ himself in making models almost exclusively. The transference of the figure from the clay to the marble is, I am informed by Chantrey, a mere mechanical art, excepting that some finishing touches are required. Now it follows that Greenshields may model, I dare say, six figures while he could only cut one in stone, and in the former practice must make a proportional progress in the principles of his art. The knowledge of his art is only to be gained in the studio of some sculptor of eminence.

'The task which Mr. G. is full of at present seems to be chosen on a false principle, chiefly adopted from a want of acquaintance with the genuine and proper object of art. The public of Edinburgh have been deservedly amused and delighted with two figures in the character of Tam O'Shanter and his drunken companion Souter Johnny. The figures were much and justly applauded, and the exhibition being of a kind adapted to every taste, is daily filled. I rather think it is the success of this piece by a man much in his own circumstances, which has inclined Mr. Greenshields to propose cutting a group of grotesque figures from the Beggars' Cantata of the same poet. Now, in the first place, I suspect six figures will form too many for a sculptor to group to advantage. But besides, I deprecate the attempt at such a subject. I do not consider caricature as a proper style for sculpture at all. We have Pan and his Satyrs in ancient sculpture, but the place of these characters in the classic mythology gives them a certain degree of dignity. Besides this, "the gambol has been shown." Mr. Thom has produced a group of this particular kind, and instead of comparing what Greenshields might do in this way with higher models, the public would certainly regard him as the rival of Mr. Thom, and give Mr. Thom the preference, on the same principle that the Spaniard says when one man walks first, all the rest must be his followers. At the same time I highly approved of one figure in the group, I mean that of Burns himself. Burns (taking his more contemplative moments) would indeed be a noble study, and I am convinced Mr. G. would do it nobly—as, for example, when Coila describes him as gazing on a snow-storm,—

I saw grim Nature's visage hoar,
Strike thy young eye.[1]

I suppose it possible to represent rocks with icicles in sculpture.

'Upon the moment I did not like to mention to Mr. G. my objections against a scheme which was obviously a favourite one, but I felt as I did when my poor friend John Kemble threatened to play Falstaff. In short, the perdurable character of sculpture, the grimly and stern severity of its productions, their size too, and their consequence, confine the art to what is either dignified and noble, or beautiful and graceful: it is, I think, inapplicable to situations of broad humour. A painting of Teniers is very well—it is of a moderate size, and only looked at when we choose; but a group of his drunken boors dancing in stone, as large as life, to a grinning fiddler at the bottom of a drawing-room, would, I think, be soon found intolerable bad company.

'I think, therefore, since Mr. Greenshields has a decided call to the higher and nobler department of his art, he should not be desirous of procuring immediate attention by attempting a less legitimate object. I desired Mr. Lockhart of Milton to state to Mr. G. what I felt on the above subject, and I repeat it to you, that, if I am so fortunate as to agree in opinion with your Lordship, you may exert your powerful influence on the occasion.

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[1] Burns's *Vision.*

'I have only to add, that I am quite willing to contribute my mite to put Mr. Greenshields in the way of the best instruction, which seems to me the best thing which can be done for him. I think your Lordship will hardly claim another epistolary debt from me, since I have given it like a tether, which, Heaven knows, is no usual error of mine. I am always, with respect, my dear Lord, your Lordship's most faithful and obedient servant,

'WALTER SCOTT.

'*P.S.*—I ought to mention, that I saw a good deal of Mr. Greenshields, for he walked with us, while we went over the grounds at Milton to look out a situation for a new house.'

Mr. Greenshields saw Sir Walter again in Clydesdale in 1831, and profited so well by these scanty opportunities as to produce a statue of the poet, in a sitting posture, which, all the circumstances considered, must be allowed to be a very wonderful performance. He subsequently executed various other works, each surpassing the promise of the other; but I fear his enthusiastic zeal had led him to unwise exertions. His health gave way, and he died in April 1835, at the age of forty, in the humble cottage of his parents. Celebrity had in no degree changed his manners or his virtues. The most flattering compliment he ever received was a message from Sir Francis Chantrey, inviting him to come to London, and offering to take him into his house, and give him all the benefits of his advice, instruction, and example. This kindness filled his eyes with tears—but the hand of fate was already upon him.

Scott's Diary for the day on which he wrote to Lord

Elgin says—'We strolled about Milton on as fine a day as could consist with snow on the ground, in company with John Greenshields, the new sculptor, a sensible, strong-minded man. The situation is eminently beautiful; a fine promontory round which the Clyde makes a magnificent bend. We fixed on a situation for William's new house where the sitting-rooms will command the upper valley; and, with an ornamental garden, I think it may be made the prettiest place in Scotland. Next day, on our way to Edinburgh, we stopped at Allanton to see a tree transplanted, which was performed with great ease. Sir Henry Stewart is lifted beyond the solid earth by the effect of his book's success;—but the book well deserves it.[1] He is in practice particularly anxious to keep the roots of the trees near the surface, and only covers them with about a foot of earth.—*Note.* Lime rubbish dug in among the roots of ivy encourages it much.—The operation delayed us three hours, so it was seven before we reached our dinner and a good fire in Shandwick Place, and we were well-nigh frozen to death. During the excursion I walked very ill—with more pain in fact than I ever remember to have felt—and, even leaning on John Lockhart, could hardly get on.—Well, the day of return to Edinburgh is come. I don't know why, but I am more happy at the change than usual. I am not working hard, and it is what I ought to do and must do. Every hour of laziness cries fie upon me. But there is a perplexing sinking of the heart which one cannot always overcome. At such times I have wished myself a clerk, quill-driving for twopence per page. You have at least application, and that is all that is necessary, whereas, unless your lively faculties are awake and propitious, your application will do you as little good as if you strained your sinews to lift Arthur's Seat.'

On the 23rd he says—'The Solicitor[2] came to dine with me—we drank a bottle of champaign, and two bottles of claret, which, in former days, I should have thought a very sober allowance, since, Lockhart included, there were three persons to drink it. But I felt I had drunk too much, and was uncomfortable. The young men stood it like young men.—Skene and his wife and daughter looked in in the evening. I suppose I am turning to my second childhood, for not only am I filled drunk, or made stupid at least, with one bottle of wine, but I am disabled from writing by chilblains on my fingers—a most babyish complaint.'

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[1] See Sir Walter's article on Ornamental Gardening—Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xxi. Sir H. Stewart, Bart. died in March 1836.

[2] John Hope, Esq., Solicitor-General—now Dean of the Faculty of Advocates.

At this time the chief topic of discourse in Edinburgh was the atrocious series of murders perpetrated by a gang of Irish desperadoes, Burke, Hare, etc., in a house or cellar of the West Port, to which they seduced poor old wayfaring people, beggar women, idiots, and so forth, and then filled them drunk, and smothered or strangled them, for the mere purpose of having bodies to sell to the anatomists. Sir Walter writes, on the 28th—'Burke the murderer hanged this morning. The mob, which was immense, demanded Knox and Hare, but though greedy for more victims, received with shouts the solitary wretch who found his way to the gallows out of five or six who seem not less guilty than he. But the story begins to be stale, insomuch that I believe a doggerel ballad upon it would be popular, how brutal soever the wit. This is the progress of human passion. We ejaculate, exclaim, hold up to heaven our hand, like the rustic Phidyle[1]—next morning the mood changes, and we dance a jig to the tune which moved us to tears.'

A few days later he discusses the West Port tragedy in this striking letter. It was written in answer to one announcing Miss Fanny Edgeworth's marriage with Mr. Lestock Wilson:—

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[1] Cœlo supinas si tuleris manus
Nascente luna, rustica Phidyle, etc.
Hor. Lib. iii. Od. 23.

'*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.*

'EDINBURGH, *Feb.* 4, 1829.

'MY DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH—I have had your letter several days, and only answer just now—not, you may believe, from want of interest in the contents, but from the odd circumstance of being so much afflicted with chilblains in the fingers, that my pen scrambles every way but the right one. Assuredly I should receive the character of the most crabbed fellow from those modern sages who judge of a man from his handwriting. But as an old man becomes a child, I must expect, I suppose, measles and small-pox. I only wish I could get a fresh set of teeth. To tell you the truth, I feel the advance of age more than I like, though my general health is excellent; but I am not able to walk as I did, and I fear I could not now visit St. Kevin's Bed. This is a great affliction to one who has been so active as I have been, in spite of all disadvantages. I must now have a friendly arm, instead of relying on my own exertions; and it is sad to think I shall be worse before I am better. However, the mild weather may help me in some degree, and the worst is a quiet pony (I used to detest a quiet pony), or perhaps a garden-chair. All this does not prevent my sincere sympathy in the increase of happiness, which I hope Miss Fanny's marriage will afford to herself, and you, and all who love her. I have not had the same opportunity to know her merits as those of my friends Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Fox; but I saw enough of her (being your sister) when at Dublin, to feel most sincerely interested in a young person whose exterior is so amiable. In Mr. Wilson you describe the national character of John Bull, who is not the worst of the three nations, though he has not the quick feeling and rich humour of your countrymen, nor the shrewd sagacity, or the romantic spirit of thinking and adventuring which the Scotch often conceal under their apparent coldness, and which you have so well painted in the M'Leod of your Ennui. Depend upon it, I shall find

Russell Square when I go to London, were I to have a voyage of discovery to make it out; and it will be Mr. Wilson's fault if we do not make an intimate acquaintance.

'I had the pleasure of receiving, last autumn, your American friend Miss Douglas,[1] who seems a most ingenuous person; and I hope I succeeded in making her happy during her short visit at Abbotsford; for I was compelled to leave her to pay suit and service at the Circuit. The mention of the Circuit brings me to the horrors which you have so well described, and which resemble nothing so much as a wild dream. Certainly I thought, like you, that the public alarm was but an exaggeration of vulgar rumour; but the tragedy is too true, and I look in vain for a remedy of the evils, in which it is easy to see this black and unnatural business has found its origin. The principal source certainly lies in the feelings of attachment which the Scotch have for their deceased friends. They are curious in the choice of their sepulchre, and a common shepherd is often, at whatever ruinous expense to his family, transported many miles to some favourite place of burial which has been occupied by his fathers. It follows, of course, that any interference with these remains is considered with most utter horror and indignation. To such of their superiors as they love from clanship or habits of dependance, they attach the same feeling. I experienced it when I had a great domestic loss; for I learned afterwards that the cemetery was guarded, out of good will, by the servants and dependants who had been attached to her during life; and were I to be laid beside my lost companion just now, I have no doubt it would be long before my humble friends would discontinue the same watch over my remains, and that it would incur mortal risk to approach them with the purpose of violation. This is a kind and virtuous principle, in which every one so far partakes, that, although an unprejudiced person would have no objection to the idea of his own remains undergoing dissection, if their being exposed to scientific research could be of the least service to humanity, yet we all shudder at the notion of any one who had been dear to us, especially a wife or sister, being subjected to a scalpel among a gazing and unfeeling crowd of students. One would fight and die to prevent it. This current of feeling is encouraged by the law which, as distinguishing murderers and other atrocious criminals, orders that their bodies shall be given for public dissection. This makes it almost impossible to consign the bodies of those who die in the public hospitals to the same fate; for it would be inflicting on poverty the penalty which, wisely or unwisely, the law of the country has denounced against guilt of the highest degree; and it would assuredly deprive all who have a remaining spark of feeling or shame, of the benefit of those consolations of charity of which they are the best objects. If the prejudice be not very liberal, it is surely natural, and so deeply-seated that many of the best feelings must be destroyed ere it can be eradicated. What then remains? The only chance I see is to permit importation from other countries. If a subject can be had in Paris for ten or twenty francs, it will surely pay the importer who brings it to Scotland. Something must be done, for there is an end of the *Cantabit vacuus*,[1] the last prerogative of beggary, which entitled him to laugh at the risk of robbery. The veriest wretch in the highway may be better booty than a person of consideration, since the last may have but a few shillings in his pocket, and the beggar, being once dead, is worth ten pounds to his murderer.

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[1] Now married to Henry D. Cruger, Esq., of New York.—[1839.]

'The great number of the lower Irish which have come over here since the peace, is, like all important occurrences, attended with its own share of good and evil. It must relieve Ireland in part of the excess of population, which is one of its greatest evils, and it accommodates Scotland with a race of hardy and indefatigable labourers, without which it would be impossible to carry on the very expensive improvements which have been executed. Our canals, our railroads, and our various public works, are all wrought

[1] Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.—Juvenal.

by Irish. I have often employed them myself at burning clay, and similar operations, and have found them as labourers quiet and tractable, light-spirited, too, and happy to a degree beyond belief, and in no degree quarrelsome, keep whisky from them and them from whisky. But most unhappily for all parties they work at far too low a rate—at a rate, in short, which can but just procure salt and potatoes; they become reckless, of course, of all the comforts and decencies of life, which they have no means of procuring. Extreme poverty brings ignorance and vice, and these are the mothers of crime. If Ireland were to submit to some kind of poor-rate—I do not mean that of England, but something that should secure to the indigent their natural share of the fruits of the earth, and enable them at least to feed while others are feasting—it would, I cannot doubt, raise the character of the lower orders, and deprive them of that recklessness of futurity which leads them to think only of the present. Indeed, where intoxication of the lower ranks is mentioned as a vice, we must allow the temptation is well-nigh inevitable; meat, clothes, fire, all that men can and do want, are supplied by a drop of whisky, and no one should be surprised that the relief (too often the only one within the wretches' power) is eagerly grasped at.

'We pay back, I suspect, the inconveniences we receive from the character of our Irish importation, by sending you a set of half-educated, cold-hearted Scotchmen, to be agents and middle-men. Among them, too, there are good and excellent characters, yet I can conceive they often mislead their employers. I am no great believer in the extreme degree of improvement to be derived from the advancement of science; for every study of that nature tends, when pushed to a certain extent, to harden the heart, and render the philosopher reckless of everything save the objects of his own pursuit; all equilibrium in the character is destroyed, and the visual force of the understanding is perverted by being fixed on one object exclusively. Thus we see theological sects (although inculcating the moral doctrines) are eternally placing man's zeal in opposition to them; and even in the practice of the bar, it is astonishing how we become callous to right and wrong, when the question is to gain or lose a cause. I have myself often wondered how I became so indifferent to the horrors of a criminal trial, if it involved a point of law. In like manner, the pursuit of physiology inflicts tortures on the lower animals of creation, and at length comes to rub shoulders against the West Port. The state of high civilization to which we have arrived, is perhaps scarcely a national blessing, since, while the *few* are improved to the highest point, the *many* are in proportion tantalized and degraded, and the same nation displays at the same time the very highest and the very lowest state in which the human race can exist in point of intellect. *Here* is a doctor who is able to take down the whole clock-work of the human frame, and may in time find some way of repairing and putting it together again; and *there* is Burke with the body of his murdered countrywoman on his back, and her blood on his hands, asking his price from the learned carcass-butcher. After all, the golden age was the period for general happiness, when the earth gave its stores without labour, and the people existed only in the numbers which it could easily subsist; but this was too good to last. As our numbers grew, our wants multiplied—and here we are, contending with increasing difficulties by the force of repeated inventions. Whether we shall at last eat each other, as of yore, or whether the earth will get a flap with a comet's tail first, who but the reverend Mr. Irving will venture to pronounce?

'Now here is a fearful long letter, and the next thing is to send it under Lord Francis Gower's omnipotent frank.[1] Anne sends best compliments; she says she had the honour to despatch her congratulations to you already. Walter and his little wife are at Nice; he is now major of his regiment, which is rapid advancement, and so has gone abroad to see the world. Lockhart has been here for a week or two, but is now gone for England. I suspect he is at this moment stopped by the snow-storm, and solacing himself with a cigar somewhere in Northumberland; that is all the news that can interest you. Dr. and Mrs. Brewster are rather getting over their heavy loss, but it is still too visible on their brows, and that broad river lying daily before them is a sad remembrancer. I saw a brother of yours on a visit at Allerley;[1] he dined with us one day, and promised to come and see us next summer, which I hope he will make good.—My pen has been declaring itself independent this last half-hour, which is the more unnatural, as it is engaged in writing to its former mistress.[2]—Ever yours affectionately, W. Scott.'

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[1] Lord F. G. (now Lord F. Egerton) was Secretary for Ireland, under the Duke of Wellington's Ministry.

Sir Walter's operations appear to have been interrupted ever and anon, during January and February 1829, in consequence of severe distress in the household of his printer; whose warm affections were not, as in his own case, subjected to the authority of a stoical will. On the 14th of February the Diary says—'The letters I received were numerous, and craved answers, yet the 3rd vol. is getting on *hooly and fairly*. I am twenty leaves before the printer, but Ballantyne's wife is ill, and it is his nature to indulge apprehensions of the worst, which incapacitates him for labour. I cannot help regarding this amiable weakness of the mind with something too nearly allied to contempt.' On the 17th—'I received the melancholy news that James Ballantyne has lost his wife. With his domestic habits the blow is irretrievable. What can he do, poor fellow, at the head of such a family of children? I should not be surprised if he were to give way to despair.' James was not able to appear at his wife's funeral; and this Scott viewed with something more than pity. Next morning, however, says the Diary:—'Ballantyne came in, to my surprise, about twelve o'clock. He was very serious, and spoke as if he had some idea of sudden and speedy death. He mentioned that he had named Cadell, Cowan, young Hughes, and his brother, to be his trustees, with myself. He has settled to go to the country, poor fellow!'

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[1] Allerley is the seat of Sir David Brewster, opposite Melrose. A fine boy, one of Sir David's sons, had been drowned a year before in the Tweed.

[2] Miss Edgeworth had given Sir Walter a bronze inkstand (said to have belonged to Ariosto), with appurtenances.

Ballantyne retired accordingly to some sequestered place near Jedburgh, and there indulged his grief in solitude. Scott regarded this as weakness, and in part at least as wilful weakness, and addressed to him several letters of strong remonstrance and rebuke. I have read them, but do not possess them; nor perhaps would it have been proper for me to print them. In writing of the case to myself, he says—'I have a sore grievance in poor Ballantyne's increasing lowness of heart, and I fear he is sinking rapidly into the condition of a religious dreamer. His retirement from Edinburgh was the worst advised scheme in the world. I in vain reminded him, that when our Saviour himself was to be led into temptation, the first thing the Devil thought of was to get him into the wilderness.' Ballantyne, after a few weeks, resumed his place in the printing office; but he addicted himself more and more to what his friend considered as erroneous and extravagant notions of religious doctrine; and I regret to say that in this difference originated a certain alienation, not of affection, but of confidence, which was visible to every near observer of their subsequent intercourse. Towards the last, indeed, they saw but little of each other. I suppose, however, it is needless to add that, down to the very last, Scott watched over Ballantyne's interests with undiminished attention.

I must give a few more extracts from the Diary, for the Spring Session, during which Anne of Geierstein was finished, and the Prospectus of the Opus Magnum issued. —Several entries refer to the final carrying of the Roman Catholic Question. When the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel announced their intention of conceding those claims, on which the reader has already seen Scott's opinion, there were meetings and petitions enough in

Edinburgh as elsewhere; and though he felt considerable repugnance to acting in any such matter with Whigs and Radicals, in opposition to a great section of the Tories, he ultimately resolved not to shrink from doing his part in support of the Duke's government on that critical experiment. He wrote, I believe, several articles in favour of the measure for the Weekly Journal; he spoke, though shortly, at the principal meeting, and proposed one of its resolutions; and when the consequent petition was read in the House of Commons, his name among the subscribers was received with such enthusiasm, that Sir Robert Peel thought fit to address to him a special and very cordial letter of thanks on that occasion.

DIARY—'*February* 23.—Anne and I dined at Skene's, where we met Mr. and Mrs. George Forbes, Colonel and Mrs. Blair, George Bell, etc. The party was a pleasant one. Colonel Blair told us that at the commencement of the battle of Waterloo, there was some trouble to prevent the men from breaking their ranks. He expostulated with one man—"Why, my good fellow, you cannot propose to beat the French alone? You had better keep your ranks." The man, who was one of the 71st, returned to his place, saying, "I believe you are right, sir, but I am a man of a very *hot temper*." There was much *bonhomie* in the reply.

'*February* 24.—Snowy miserable morning. I corrected my proofs, and then went to breakfast with Mr. Drummond Hay, where we again met Colonel and Mrs. Blair, with Thomas Thomson. We looked over some most beautiful drawings which Mrs. Blair had made in different parts of India, exhibiting a species of architecture so gorgeous, and on a scale so extensive, as to put to shame the magnificence of Europe;[1] and yet, in most cases, as little is known of the people who wrought these wonders as of the kings who built the Pyramids. Fame depends on literature, not on architecture. We are more eager to see a broken column of Cicero's villa, than all these mighty labours of barbaric power. Mrs. Blair is full of enthusiasm. She told me, that when she worked with her pencil she was glad to have some one to read to her as a sort of sedative, otherwise her excitement made her tremble, and burst out a-crying. I can understand this very well. On returning home, I wrought, but not much—rather dawdled and took to reading Chambers's Beauties of Scotland, which would be admirable if they were accurate. He is a clever young fellow, but hurts himself by too much haste. I am not making too much myself I know—and I know, too, it is time I were making it—unhappily there is such a thing as more haste and less speed. I can very seldom think to purpose by lying perfectly idle, but when I take an idle book, or a walk, my mind strays back to its task, out of contradiction as it were; the things I read become mingled with those I have been writing, and something is concocted. I cannot compare this process of the mind to anything save that of a woman to whom the mechanical operation of spinning serves as a running bass to the songs she sings, or the course of ideas she pursues. The phrase *Hoc age*, so often quoted by my father, does not jump with my humour. I cannot nail my mind to one subject of contemplation, and it is by nourishing two trains of ideas that I can bring one into order.

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[1] Some of these fine drawings have been engraved for Colonel Tod's Travels in Western India. London, 4to, 1839.

'*February* 28.—Finished my proofs this morning; and read part of a curious work, called Memoirs of Vidocq; a fellow who was at the head of Buonaparte's police. It is a *picaresque* tale; in other words, a romance of roguery. The whole seems much exaggerated, and got up; but I suppose there is truth *au fond*. I came home about two o'clock, and wrought hard and fast till now—night. I cannot get myself to feel at all anxious about the Catholic question. I cannot see the use of fighting about the platter, when you have let them snatch the meat off it. I hold Popery to be such a mean and depraving superstition, that I am not sure I could have found myself liberal enough for voting the repeal of the penal laws as they existed before 1780. They must, and would, in course of time, have smothered Popery; and, I confess, I should have seen the old lady of Babylon's mouth stopped with pleasure. But now, that you have taken the plaster off her mouth, and given her free respiration, I cannot see the sense of keeping up the irritation about the claim to sit in Parliament. Unopposed, the Catholic superstition may sink into dust, with all its absurd ritual and solemnities. Still it is an awful risk. The world is, in fact, as silly as ever, and a good competence of nonsense will always find believers. Animal magnetism, phrenology, etc. etc., have all had their believers, and why not Popery? Ecod! if they should begin to make Smithfield broils, I do not know where many an honest Protestant could find courage enough to be carbonadoed? I should shrink from the thoughts of tar-barrels and gibbets, I am afraid, and make a very pusillanimous martyr. So I hope the Duke of Wellington will keep the horned beast well in hand, and not let her get her leg over the harrows.

'*March* 4.—At four o'clock arrives Mr. Cadell, with his horn charged with good news. The prospectus of the Magnum, although issued only a week, has produced such a demand among the trade, that he thinks he must add a large number of copies, that the present edition of 7000 may be increased to meet the demand; he talks of raising it to 10 or 12,000. If so, I shall have a powerful and constant income to bear on my unfortunate debts for several years to come, and may fairly hope to put every claim in a secure way of payment. Laidlaw dined with me, and, poor fellow, was as much elated with the news as I am, for it is not of a nature to be kept secret. I hope I shall have him once more at Kaeside to debate, as we used to do, on religion and politics.

'*March* 5.—I am admitted a member of the Maitland Club of Glasgow, a Society on the principle of the Roxburgh and Bannatyne. What a tail of the alphabet I should draw after me were I to sign with the indications of the different societies I belong to, beginning with President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and ending with Umpire of the Six-feet-high Club.[1]

'*March* 6.—Made some considerable additions to the Appendix to General Preface. I am in the sentiments towards the public that the buffoon player expresses towards his patron—

> Go tell my good Lord, said this modest young man,
> If he will but invite me to dinner,
> I'll be as diverting as ever I can—
> I will, on the faith of a sinner.

I will multiply the notes, therefore, when there is a chance of giving pleasure and variety. There is a stronger gleam of hope on my affairs than has yet touched on them ; it is not steady or certain, but it is bright and conspicuous. Ten years may last with me, though I have but little chance of it.

'*March* 7.—Sent away proofs. This extrication of my affairs, though only a Pisgah prospect, occupies my mind more than is fitting ; but without some such hopes I must have felt like one of the victims of the wretch Burke, struggling against a smothering weight on my bosom, till nature could endure it no longer.

'*March* 8.—Ballantyne, by a letter of this morning, totally condemns Anne of Geierstein. Third volume nearly finished—a pretty thing, truly, for I shall be expected to do all over again. Great dishonour in this, as Trinculo says, besides an infinite loss. Sent for Cadell to attend me to-morrow morning, that we may consult about this business.—Peel has made his motion on the Catholic question with a speech of three hours. It is almost a complete surrender to the Catholics ; and so it should be, for half measures do but linger out the feud. This will, or rather ought to satisfy all men who sincerely love peace, and, therefore, all men of property. But will this satisfy Pat, who, with all his virtues, is certainly not the most sensible person in the world? Perhaps not; and if not, it is but fighting them at last. I smoked away, and thought of ticklish politics and bad novels.

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[1] This was a sportive association of young athletes. Hogg, I think, was their Poet Laureate.

'*March* 9.—Cadell came to breakfast. We resolved in privy council to refer the question whether Anne of G——n be seaworthy or not, to further consideration, which, as the book cannot be published, at any rate, during the full rage of the Catholic question, may be easily managed. After breakfast I went to Sir William Arbuthnot's,[1] and met there a select party of Tories, to decide whether we should act with the Whigs, by adopting their petition in favour of the Catholics. I was not free from apprehension that the petition might be put into such language as I, at least, should be unwilling to homologate by my subscription. The Solicitor was voucher that they would keep the terms quite general; whereupon we subscribed the requisition for a meeting, with a slight alteration, affirming that it was our desire not to have intermeddled, had not the anti-Catholics pursued that course; and so the Whigs and we are embarked in the same boat—*vogue la galère*.

'Went about one o'clock to the Castle, where we saw the auld murderess Mons Meg[2] brought up in solemn procession to reoccupy her ancient place on the Argyle battery. The day was cold, but serene, and I think the ladies must have been cold enough, not to mention the Celts who turned out upon the occasion, under the leading of Cluny Macpherson, a fine spirited lad. Mons

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[1] This gentleman was a favourite with Sir Walter—a special point of communion being the Antiquities of the British Drama. He was Provost of Edinburgh in 1816-17, and again in 1822, and the King gracefully surprised him by proposing his health, at the civic Banquet in the Parliament House (see *ante*, vol. iv. p. 45), as 'Sir William Arbuthnot, Baronet.'

[2] See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 59.

Meg is a monument of our pride and poverty. The size is enormous, but six smaller guns would have been made at the same expense, and done six times as much execution as she could have done. There was immense interest taken in the show by the people of the town, and the numbers who crowded the Castle-hill had a magnificent appearance. About thirty of our Celts attended in costume: and as there was a Highland regiment for duty, with dragoons and artillerymen, the whole made a splendid show. The style in which the last manned and wrought the windlass which raised Old Meg, weighing seven or eight tons, from her temporary carriage to that which has been her basis for many years, was singularly beautiful as a combined exhibition of skill and strength. My daughter had what might have proved a frightful accident. Some rockets were let off, one of which lighted upon her head, and set her bonnet on fire. She neither screamed nor ran, but quietly permitted Charles Sharpe to extinguish the fire, which he did with great coolness and dexterity. All who saw her, especially the friendly Celts, gave her merit for her steadiness, and said she came of good blood. My own courage was not tried, for being at some distance escorting the beautiful and lively Countess of Hopetoun, I did not hear of the accident till it was over.

'We lunched with the regiment (73rd) now in the castle. The little entertainment gave me an opportunity of observing what I have often before remarked — the improvement in the character of the young and subaltern officers in the army, which in the course of a long and bloody war had been, in point of rank and manners, something deteriorated. The number of persons applying for commissions (3000 being now on the lists) gives an opportunity of selection; and officers should certainly be *gentlemen*, with a complete opening to all who can rise by merit. The style in which duty and the knowledge of their profession are now enforced, prevents *fainéants* from remaining long in the profession.

'In the evening I presided at the annual festival of the Celtic Club. I like this Society, and willingly give myself to be excited by the sight of handsome young men with plaids and claymores, and all the alertness and spirit of Highlanders in their native garb. There was the usual degree of excitation — excellent dancing, capital songs, a general inclination to please and to be pleased. A severe cold caught on the battlements of the Castle prevented me from playing first fiddle so well as on former occasions, but what I could do was received with the usual partiality of the Celts. I got home fatigued and *vino gravatus* about eleven o'clock. We had many guests, some of whom, English officers, seemed both amused and surprised at our wild ways, especially at the dancing without ladies, and the mode of drinking favourite toasts, by springing up with one foot on the bench and one on the table, and the peculiar shriek of applause, so unlike English cheering.

'*Abbotsford*, *March* 18.—I like the hermit life indifferent well, nor would, I sometimes think, break my heart, were I to be in that magic mountain where food was regularly supplied by ministering genii, and plenty of books were accessible without the least interruption of human society. But this is thinking like a fool. Solitude is only agreeable when the power of having society is removed to a short space, and can be commanded at pleasure. "It is not good for man to be alone."[1] It blunts our faculties and freezes our active virtues. And now, my watch pointing to noon, I think after four hours' work I may indulge myself with a walk. The dogs see me about to shut my desk, and intimate their happiness by caresses and whining. By your leave, Messrs. Genii of the Mountain, if I come to your retreat I'll bring my dogs with me.

'The day was showery, but not unpleasant — soft dropping rains, attended by a mild atmosphere, that spoke of flowers in their seasons, and a chirping of birds, that had a touch of spring in it. I had the patience to get fully wet, and the grace to be thankful for it.

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[1] Genesis ii. 18.

'Come, a little flourish on the trumpet. Let us rouse the Genius of this same red mountain—so called, because it is all the year covered with roses. There can be no difficulty in finding it, for it lies toward the Caspian, and is quoted in the Persian Tales. Well, I open my ephemerides, form my scheme under the suitable planet, and the Genius obeys the invitation, and appears. The Gnome is a misshapen dwarf, with a huge jolter-head like that of Boerhaave on the Bridge,[1] his limbs and body monstrously shrunk and disproportioned.—"Sir Dwarf," said I, undauntedly, "thy head is very large, and thy feet and limbs somewhat small in proportion." "I have crammed my head, even to the overflowing, with knowledge; and I have starved my limbs by disuse of exercise and denial of sustenance!"—"Can I acquire wisdom in thy solitary library?" "Thou mayest!"—"On what condition?" "Renounce all gross and fleshly pleasures, eat pulse and drink water, converse with none but the wise and learned, alive and dead."—"Why, this were to die in the cause of wisdom!" "If you desire to draw from our library only the advantage of seeming wise, you may have it consistent with all your favourite enjoyments."—"How much sleep?" "A Lapland night—eight months out of the twelve."—"Enough for a dormouse, most generous Genius—a bottle of wine?" "Two, if you please; but you must not seem to care for them—cigars in loads, whisky in lushings—only they must be taken with an air of contempt, a *flocci-pauci-nihili-pili-fication* of all that can gratify the outward man."—"I am about to ask you a serious question—when one has stuffed his stomach, drunk his bottle, and smoked his cigar, how is he to keep himself awake?" "Either by cephalic snuff or castle-building."—"Do you approve of castle-building as a frequent exercise?"—*Genius.* "Life were not life without it—

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[1] This head may still be seen over a laboratory at No. 100 of the South Bridge, Edinburgh.—*N.B.* There is a tradition that the venerable busto in question was once dislodged by 'Colonel Grogg' and some of his companions, and waggishly planted in a very inappropriate position.

> Give me the joy that sickens not the heart,
> Give me the wealth that has no wings to fly."

—*Author.* "I reckon myself one of the best aërial architects now living, and *Nil me pœnitet.*"—*Genius.* "*Nec est cur te pœniteat.* Most of your novels had previously been subjects for airy castles."—*Author.* "You have me—and moreover a man derives experience from such fanciful visions. There are few situations I have not in fancy figured, and there are few, of course, which I am not previously prepared to take some part in."—*Genius.* "True; but I am afraid your having fancied yourself victorious in many a fight, would be of little use were you suddenly called to the field, and your personal infirmities and nervous agitations both rushing upon you and incapacitating you."—*Author.* "My nervous agitations! down with them!—

> Down, down to limbo and the burning lake!
> False fiend, avoid!—
> So there ends the tale, with a hoy, with a hoy,
> So there ends the tale with a ho.
> There's a moral—if you fail
> To seize it by the tail,
> Its import will exhale, you must know."

'*March* 19.—The above was written yesterday before dinner, though appearances are to the contrary. I only meant that the studious solitude I have sometimes dreamed of, unless practised with rare stoicism, might perchance degenerate into secret indulgences of coarser appetites, which, when the cares and restraints of social life are removed, are apt to make us think, with Dr. Johnson, our dinner the most important event of the day. So much in the way of explanation, a humour which I love not. Go to. I fagged at my Review on Ancient Scottish History, both before and after breakfast. I walked from one o'clock till near three. I make it out rather better than of late I have been able to do in the streets of Edinburgh, where I am ashamed to walk so slow as would suit me. Indeed nothing but a certain suspicion, that once drawn up on the beach, I would soon break up, prevents my renouncing pedestrian exercises altogether, for it is positive suffering, and of an acute kind too.

'*March* 26.—Sent off ten pages of the Maid of the Mist this morning with a murrain :—But how to get my catastrophe packed into the compass allotted for it?

> It sticks like a pistol half out of its holster,
> Or rather indeed like an obstinate bolster,
> Which I think I have seen you attempting, my dear,
> In vain to cram into a small pillow-beer.

There is no help for it—I must make a *tour de force*, and annihilate both time and space.

'*March* 28.—In spite of the temptation of a fine morning, I toiled manfully at the Review till two o'clock, commencing at seven. I fear it will be uninteresting, but I like the muddling work of antiquities, and, besides, wish to record my sentiments with regard to the Gothic question. No one that has not laboured as I have done on imaginary topics can judge of the comfort afforded by walking on all fours, and being grave and dull. I daresay, when the clown of the pantomime escapes from his nightly task of vivacity, it is his especially to smoke a pipe and be prosy with some good-natured fellow, the dullest of his acquaintance. I have seen such a tendency in Sir Adam Fergusson, the gayest man I ever knew; and poor Tom Sheridan has complained to me on the fatigue of supporting the character of an agreeable companion.

'*April* 3.—Both Sir James Mackintosh and Lord Haddington have spoken very handsomely in Parliament of my accession to the Catholic petition, and I think it has done some good; yet I am not confident that the measure will disarm the Catholic spleen — nor am I entirely easy at finding myself allied to the Whigs even in the instance where I agree with them. This is witless prejudice, however.

‘*April* 8.—We have the news of the Catholic question being carried in the House of Lords, by a majority of 105 upon the second reading. This is decisive, and the balsam of Fierabras must be swallowed.

‘*April* 9.—I have bad news of James Ballantyne. Hypochondria, I am afraid, and religiously distressed in mind.

‘*April* 18.—Corrected proofs. I find J. B. has not returned to his business, though I wrote to say how necessary it was. My pity begins to give way to anger. Must he sit there and squander his thoughts and senses upon dowdy metaphysics and abstruse theology, till he addles his brains entirely, and ruins his business?—I have written to him again, letter third, and, I am determined, last.

‘*April* 20.—Lord Buchan is dead, a person whose immense vanity, bordering upon insanity, obscured, or rather eclipsed, very considerable talents. His imagination was so fertile, that he seemed really to believe the extraordinary fictions which he delighted in telling. His economy, most laudable in the early part of his life, when it enabled him, from a small income, to pay his father's debts, became a miserable habit, and led him to do mean things. He had a desire to be a great man and a Mecænas—*à bon marché*. The two celebrated lawyers, his brothers, were not more gifted by nature than I think he was, but the restraints of a profession kept the eccentricity of the family in order. Henry Erskine was the best-natured man I ever knew, thoroughly a gentleman, and with but one fault—He could not say *no*, and thus sometimes misled those who trusted him. Tom Erskine was positively mad. I have heard him tell a cock-and-bull story of having seen the ghost of his father's servant, John Burnet, with as much gravity as if he believed every word he was saying. Both Henry and Thomas were saving men, yet both died very poor. The latter at one time possessed £200,000; the other had a considerable fortune. The Earl alone has died wealthy. It is saving, not getting, that is the mother of riches. They all had wit. The Earl's was crack-brained, and sometimes caustic; Henry's was of the very kindest, best-humoured, and gayest sort that ever cheered society; that of Lord Erskine was moody and muddish. But I never saw him in his best days.

'*April* 25.—After writing a heap of letters, it was time to set out for Lord Buchan's funeral at Dryburgh Abbey. The letters were signed by Mr. David Erskine, his Lordship's natural son; and his nephew, the young Earl, was present; but neither of them took the head of the coffin. His Lordship's burial took place in a chapel amongst the ruins. His body was in the grave with its feet pointing westward. My cousin, Maxpopple,[1] was for taking notice of it, but I assured him that a man who had been wrong in the head all his life would scarce become right-headed after death. I felt something at parting with this old man, though but a trumpery body. He gave me the first approbation I ever obtained from a stranger. His caprice had led him to examine Dr. Adam's class when I, a boy of twelve years old, and then in disgrace for some aggravated case of negligence, was called up from a low bench, and recited my lesson with some spirit and appearance of feeling the poetry (it was the apparition of Hector's ghost in the Æneid)—which called forth the noble Earl's applause. I was very proud of this at the time. I was sad from another account—it was the first time I had been among those ruins since I left a very valued pledge there. My next visit may be involuntary. Even God's will be done—at least I have not the mortification of thinking what a deal of patronage and fuss Lord Buchan would bestow on my funeral.[1] Maxpopple dined and slept here with four of his family, much amused with what they heard and saw. By good fortune, a ventriloquist and parcel juggler came in, and we had him in the library after dinner. He was a half-starved wretched-looking creature, who seemed to have eat more fire than bread. So I caused him to be well stuffed, and gave him a guinea—rather to his poverty than to his skill—and now to finish Anne of Geierstein.'

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[1] William Scott, Esq.—the present Laird of Raeburn—was commonly thus designated from a minor possession, during his father's lifetime. Whatever, in things of this sort, used to be practised among the French noblesse, might be traced, till very lately, in the customs of the Scottish provincial gentry.

Anne of Geierstein was finished before breakfast on the 29th of April; and his Diary mentions that immediately after breakfast he began his Compendium of Scottish History for Dr. Lardner's Cyclopædia. We have seen, that when the proprietors of that work, in July 1828, offered him £500 for an abstract of Scottish History in one volume, he declined the proposal. They subsequently offered £700, and this was accepted; but though he began the task under the impression that he should find it a heavy one, he soon warmed to the subject, and pursued it with cordial zeal and satisfaction. One volume, it by and by appeared, would never do—in his own phrase, 'he must have elbow-room'—and I believe it was finally settled that he should have £1500 for the book in two volumes; of which the first was published before the end of this year.

Anne of Geierstein came out about the middle of May; and this, which may be almost called the last work of his imaginative genius, was received at least as well—(out of Scotland, that is)—as the Fair Maid of Perth had been, or indeed as any novel of his after the Crusaders. I partake very strongly, I am aware, in the feeling which most of my own countrymen have little shame in avowing, that no novel of his, where neither scenery nor character is Scottish, belongs to the same pre-eminent class with those in which he paints and peoples his native landscape. I have confessed that I cannot rank even his best English romances with such creations as Waverley and Old Mortality; far less can I believe that posterity will attach similar value to this Maid of the Mist. Its pages, however, display in undiminished perfection all the skill and grace of the mere artist, with occasional outbreaks of the old poetic spirit, more than sufficient to remove the work to an immeasurable distance from any of its order produced in this country in our own age. Indeed, the various play of fancy in the combination of persons and events, and the airy liveliness of both imagery and diction, may well justify us in applying to the author what he beautifully says of his King René—

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[1] See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 296.

> A mirthful man he was; the snows of age
> Fell, but they did not chill him. Gaiety,
> Even in life's closing, touch'd his teeming brain
> With such wild visions as the setting sun
> Raises in front of some hoar glacier,
> Painting the bleak ice with a thousand hues.

It is a common saying that there is nothing so distinctive of *genius* as the retention, in advanced years, of the capacity to depict the feelings of youth with all their original glow and purity. But I apprehend this blessed distinction belongs to, and is the just reward of, virtuous genius only. In the case of extraordinary force of imagination, combined with the habitual indulgence of a selfish mood—not combined, that is to say, with the genial temper of mind and thought which God and Nature design to be kept alive in man by those domestic charities out of which the other social virtues so easily spring, and with which they find such endless links of interdependence;—in this unhappy case, which none who has studied the biography of genius can pronounce to be a rare one, the very power which heaven bestowed seems to become, as old age darkens, the sternest avenger of its own misapplication. The retrospect of life is converted by its energy into one wide blackness of desolate regret; and whether this breaks out in the shape of a rueful contemptuousness, or a sarcastic mockery of tone, the least drop of the poison is enough to paralyze all attempts at awakening sympathy by fanciful delineations of love and friendship. Perhaps Scott has nowhere painted such feelings more deliciously than in those very scenes of Anne of Geierstein, which offer every now and then, in some incidental circumstance or reflection, the best evidence that they are drawn by a grey-headed man. The whole of his own life was too present to his wonderful memory to permit of his brooding with exclusive partiality, whether painfully or pleasurably, on any one portion or phasis of it; and besides, he was always living over again in his children, young at heart whenever he looked on them, and the world that was opening on them and their friends. But above all, he had a firm belief in the future reunion of those whom death has parted.

He lost two more of his old intimates about this time;—Mr. Terry in June, and Mr. Shortreed in the beginning of July. The Diary says:—'*July* 9. Heard of the death of poor Bob Shortreed, the companion of many a long ride among the hills in quest of old ballads. He was a merry companion, a good singer and mimic, and full of Scottish drollery. In his company, and under his guidance, I was able to see much of rural society in the mountains, which I could not otherwise have attained, and which I have made my use of. He was, in addition, a man of worth and character. I always burdened his hospitality while at Jedburgh on the circuit, and have been useful to some of his family. Poor fellow! So glide our friends from us.[1] Many recollections die with him and with poor Terry.'

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[1] Some little time before his death, the worthy Sheriff-Substitute of Roxburghshire received a set of his friend's works, with this inscription:—'To Robert Shortreed, Esq., the friend of the author from youth to age, and his guide and companion upon many an expedition among the Border hills, in quest of the materials of legendary lore which have at length filled so many volumes, this collection of the results of their former rambles is presented by his sincere friend, *Walter Scott.*'

His Diary has few more entries for this twelvemonth. Besides the volume of History for Dr. Lardner's collection, he had ready for publication by December the last of the *Scottish* Series of Tales of a Grandfather ; and had made great progress in the prefaces and notes for Cadell's *Opus Magnum.* He had also overcome various difficulties which for a time interrupted the twin scheme of an illustrated edition of his Poems : and one of these in a manner so agreeable to him, and honourable to the other party, that I must make room for the two following letters :—

'*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Regent's Park.*

'SHANDWICK PLACE, *4th June* 1829.

'MY DEAR LOCKHART—I have a commission for you to execute for me, which I shall deliver in a few words. I am now in possession of my own copyrights of every kind, excepting a few things in Longman's hands, and which I am offered on very fair terms—and a fourth share of Marmion, which is in the possession of our friend Murray. Now, I should consider it a great favour if Mr. Murray would part with it at what he may consider as a fair rate, and would be most happy to show my sense of obligation by assisting his views and speculations as far as lies in my power. I wish you could learn as soon as you can Mr. Murray's sentiments on this subject, as they would weigh with me in what I am about to arrange as to the collected edition. The Waverley Novels are doing very well indeed.—I put you to a shilling's expense, as I wish a speedy answer to the above query. I am always, with love to Sophia, affectionately yours,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.*

'ALBEMARLE STREET, *June* 8, 1829.

'MY DEAR SIR—Mr. Lockhart has this moment communicated your letter respecting my fourth share of the copyright of Marmion. I have already been applied to by Messrs. Constable and by Messrs. Longman, to know what sum I would sell this share for—but so highly do I estimate the honour of being, even in so small a degree, the publisher of the author of the poem—that no pecuniary consideration whatever can induce me to part with it.

'But there is a consideration of another kind, which until now I was not aware of, which would make it painful to me if I were to retain it a moment longer. I mean the knowledge of its being required by the author, into whose hands it was spontaneously resigned in the same instant that I read his request.

'This share has been profitable to me fifty-fold beyond what either publisher or author could have anticipated, and, therefore, my returning it on such an occasion you will, I trust, do me the favour to consider in no other light than as a mere act of grateful acknowledgment for benefits already received by, my dear Sir, your obliged and faithful servant, JOHN MURRAY.'

The success of the collective novels was far beyond what either Sir Walter or Mr. Cadell had ventured to anticipate. Before the close of 1829, eight volumes had been issued; and the monthly sale had reached as high as 35,000. Should this go on, there was, indeed, every reason to hope that, coming in aid of undiminished industry in the preparation of new works, it would wipe off all his load of debt in the course of a very few years. And during the autumn (which I spent near him) it was most agreeable to observe the effects of the prosperous intelligence, which every succeeding month brought, upon his spirits.

This was the more needed, that at this time his eldest son, who had gone to the south of France on account of some unpleasant symptoms in his health, did not at first seem to profit rapidly by the change of climate. He feared that the young man was not quite so attentive to the advice of his physicians as he ought to have been; and in one of many letters on this subject, after mentioning some of Cadell's good news as to the great affair, he says—'I have wrought hard, and so far successfully. But I tell you plainly, my dear boy, that if you permit your health to decline from want of attention, I have not strength of mind enough to exert myself in these matters as I have hitherto been doing.' Happily Major Scott was, ere long, restored to his usual state of health and activity.

Sir Walter himself, too, besides the usual allowance of rheumatism, and other lesser ailments, had an attack that season of a nature which gave his family great alarm, and which for some days he himself regarded with the darkest prognostications. After some weeks, during which he complained of headache and nervous irritation, certain hæmorrhages indicated the sort of relief required, and he obtained it from copious cupping. He says, in his Diary for June 3rd—'The ugly symptom still continues. Dr. Ross does not make much of it; and I think he is apt to look grave. Either way I am firmly resolved. I wrote in the morning. The Court kept me till near two, and then home comes I. Afternoon and evening were spent as usual. In the evening Dr. Ross ordered me to be cupped, an operation which I only knew from its being practised by those eminent medical practitioners the barbers of Bagdad. It is not painful; and, I think, resembles a giant twisting about your flesh between his finger and thumb.' After this he felt better, he said, than he had done for years before; but there can be little doubt that the natural evacuation was a very serious symptom. It was, in fact, the precursor of apoplexy. In telling the Major of his recovery, he says—'The sale of the Novels is pro—di—gi—ous. If it last but a few years, it will clear my feet of old incumbrances, nay, perhaps, enable me to talk a word to our friend Nicol Milne.

> But old ships must expect to get out of commission,
> Nor again to weigh anchor with *yo heave ho!*

However that may be, I should be happy to die a free man; and I am sure you will all be kind to poor Anne, who will miss me most. I don't intend to die a minute sooner than I can help for all this; but when a man takes to making blood instead of water, he is tempted to think on the possibility of his soon making earth.'

One of the last entries in this year's Diary gives a sketch of the celebrated Edward Irving, who was about this time deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland on account of his wild heresies.[1] Sir Walter, describing a large dinner-party, says—'I met to-day the celebrated divine and *soi-disant* prophet, Irving. He is a fine-looking man (bating a diabolical squint), with talent on his brow and madness in his eye. His dress, and the arrangement of his hair, indicated that. I could hardly keep my eyes off him while we were at table. He put me in mind of the devil disguised as an angel of light, so ill did that horrible obliquity of vision harmonize with the dark tranquil features of his face, resembling that of our Saviour in Italian pictures, with the hair carefully arranged in the same manner. There was much real or affected simplicity in the manner in which he spoke. He rather *made play*, spoke much, and seemed to be good-humoured. But he spoke with that kind of unction which is nearly allied to *cajolerie*. He boasted much of the tens of thousands that attended his ministry at the town of Annan, his native place, till he well-nigh provoked me to say he was a distinguished exception to the rule that a prophet was not esteemed in his own country. But time and place were not fitting.'

Among a few other friends from a distance, Sir Walter received this autumn a short visit from Mr. Hallam, and made in his company several of the little excursions which had in former days been of constant recurrence. Mr. Hallam had with him his son, Arthur, a young gentleman of extraordinary abilities, and as modest as able, who not long afterwards was cut off in the very bloom of opening life and genius. In a little volume of 'Remains,' which his father has since printed for private friends—with this motto—

Vattene in pace alma beata e bella,—

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[1] Mr. Irving died on 6th December 1834, aged 42.

there occurs a memorial of Abbotsford and Melrose, which I have pleasure in being allowed to quote :—

STANZAS—AUGUST 1829.

I lived an hour in fair Melrose ;
  It was not when 'the pale moonlight'
Its magnifying charm bestows ;
  Yet deem I that I 'viewed it right.'
The wind-swept shadows fast careered,
Like living things that joyed or feared,
Adown the sunny Eildon Hill,
And the sweet winding Tweed the distance crowned well.

I inly laughed to see that scene
  Wear such a countenance of youth,
Though many an age those hills were green,
  And yonder river glided smooth,
Ere in these now disjointed walls
The Mother Church held festivals
And full-voiced anthemings the while
Swelled from the choir, and lingered down the echoing aisle.

I coveted that Abbey's doom ;
  For if, I thought, the early flowers
Of our affection may not bloom,
  Like those green hills, through countless hours,
Grant me at least a tardy waning,
Some pleasure still in age's paining ;
Though lines and forms must fade away,
Still may old Beauty share the empire of Decay !

But looking toward the grassy mound
  Where calm the Douglas chieftains lie,
Who, living, quiet never found,
  I straightway learnt a lesson high :
For there an old man sat serene,
And well I knew that thoughtful mien
Of him whose early lyre had thrown
Over these mouldering walls the magic of its tone.

Then ceased I from my envying state,
  And knew that aweless intellect
Hath power upon the ways of fate,
  And works through space and time uncheck'd.

That minstrel of old chivalry,
In the cold grave must come to be,
But his transmitted thoughts have part
In the collective mind, and never shall depart.

It was a comfort too to see
  Those dogs that from him ne'er would rove,
And always eyed him reverently,
  With glances of depending love.
They know not of that eminence
Which marks him to my reasoning sense ;
They know but that he is a man,
And still to them is kind, and glads them all he can.

And, hence, their quiet looks confiding,
  Hence grateful instincts seated deep,
By whose strong bond, were ill betiding,
  They'd risk their own his life to keep.
What joy to watch in lower creature
Such dawning of a moral nature,
And how (the rule all things obey)
They look to a higher mind to be their law and stay !

The close of the autumn was embittered by a sudden and most unexpected deprivation. Apparently in the fullest enjoyment of health and vigour, Thomas Purdie leaned his head one evening on the table, and dropped asleep. This was nothing uncommon in a hard-working man ; and his family went and came about him for several hours, without taking any notice. When supper came, they tried to awaken him, and found that life had been for some time extinct. Far different from other years, Sir Walter seemed impatient to get away from Abbotsford to Edinburgh. 'I have lost,' he writes (4th November) to Cadell, 'my old and faithful servant—my factotum—and am so much shocked, that I really wish to be quit of the country and safe in town. I have this day laid him in the grave. This has prevented my answering your letters.'

The grave, close to the Abbey at Melrose, is surmounted by a modest monument, having on two sides these inscriptions :—

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

OF

THE FAITHFUL AND ATTACHED SERVICES

OF

TWENTY-TWO YEARS,

AND IN SORROW

FOR THE LOSS OF A HUMBLE BUT SINCERE FRIEND;

THIS STONE WAS ERECTED

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,
OF ABBOTSFORD.

HERE LIES THE BODY

OF

THOMAS PURDIE,

WOOD-FORESTER AT ABBOTSFORD,

WHO DIED 29TH OCTOBER 1829,

AGED SIXTY-TWO YEARS.

Thou hast been faithful
over a few things.
I will make thee ruler
over many things.
St. Matthew, chap. xxv. ver. 21st.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

Auchindrane, or the Ayrshire Tragedy—Second Volume of the History of Scotland—Paralytic seizure—Letters on Demonology, and Tales on the History of France begun —Poetry, with Prefaces, published—Reviewal of Southey's Life of Bunyan—Excursions to Culross and Prestonpans—Resignation of the Clerkship of Session—Commission on the Stuart Papers—Offers of a Pension, and of the rank of Privy-Councillor, declined—Death of George IV.—General Election—Speech at Jedburgh —Second paralytic attack—Demonology, and French History, published—Arrival of King Charles X. at Holyrood House—Letter to Lady Louisa Stuart.

1830

Sir Walter's reviewal of the early parts of Mr. Pitcairn's Ancient Criminal Trials had, of course, much gratified the editor, who sent him, on his arrival in Edinburgh, the proof-sheets of the Number then in hand, and directed his attention particularly to its details on the extraordinary case of Mure of Auchindrane, A.D. 1611. Scott was so much interested with these documents, that he resolved to found a dramatic sketch on their terrible story; and the result was a composition far superior to any of his previous attempts of that nature. Indeed there are several passages in his 'Ayrshire Tragedy'—especially that where the murdered corpse floats upright in the wake of the assassin's bark—(an incident suggested by a lamentable chapter in Lord Nelson's history)—which may bear comparison with anything but Shakespeare. Yet I doubt whether the prose narrative of the preface be not, on the whole, more dramatic than the versified scenes. It contained, by the way, some very striking allusions to the recent atrocities of Gill's Hill and the West Port. This piece was published in a thin octavo early in the year ; and the beautiful Essays on Ballad Poetry, composed with a view to a collective edition of all his Poetical Works in small cheap volumes, were about the same time attached to the octavo edition then on sale ; the state of stock not as yet permitting the new issue to be begun.

Sir Walter was now to pay the penalty of his unparalleled toils. On the 15th of February, about two o'clock in the afternoon, he returned from the Parliament House apparently in his usual state, and found an old acquaintance, Miss Young of Hawick, waiting to show him some MS. memoirs of her father (a dissenting minister of great worth and talents), which he had undertaken to revise and correct for the press. The old lady sat by him for half an hour while he seemed to be occupied with her papers ; at length he rose, as if to dismiss her, but sunk down again—a slight convulsion agitating his features. After a few minutes he got up and staggered to the drawing-room, where Anne Scott and my sister Violet Lockhart were sitting. They rushed to meet him, but he fell at all his length on the floor ere they could reach him. He remained speechless for about ten minutes, by which time a surgeon had arrived and bled him. He was cupped again in the evening, and gradually recovered possession of speech, and of all his faculties, in so far that, the occurrence being kept quiet, when he appeared abroad again after a short interval, people in general observed no serious change. He submitted to the utmost severity of regimen, tasting nothing but pulse and water for some weeks, and the alarm of his family and intimate friends subsided. By and by he again mingled in society much as usual, and seems to have *almost* persuaded himself that the attack had proceeded merely from the stomach, though his letters continued ever and anon to drop hints that the symptoms resembled apoplexy or paralysis. When we recollect that both his father and his elder brother died of paralysis, and consider the terrible violences of agitation and exertion to which Sir Walter had been subjected during the four preceding years, the only wonder is that this blow (which had, I suspect, several indistinct harbingers) was deferred so long; there can be none that it was soon followed by others of the same description.

He struggled manfully, however, against his malady, and during 1830 covered almost as many sheets with his MS. as in 1829. About March I find, from his correspondence with Ballantyne, that he was working regularly at his Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft for Murray's Family Library, and also on a Fourth Series of the Tales of a Grandfather—the subject being French history. Both of these books were published by the end of the year; and the former contains many passages worthy of his best day —little snatches of picturesque narrative and the like—in fact, transcripts of his own familiar fireside stories. The shrewdness with which evidence is sifted on legal cases attests, too, that the main reasoning faculty remained unshaken. But, on the whole, these works can hardly be submitted to a strict ordeal of criticism. There is in both a cloudiness both of words and arrangement. Nor can I speak differently of the second volume of his Scottish History for Lardner's Cyclopædia, which was published in May. His very pretty reviewal of Mr. Southey's Life and Edition of Bunyan was done in August —about which time his recovery seems to have reached its acme.

In the course of the Spring Session, circumstances rendered it highly probable that Sir Walter's resignation of his place as Clerk of Session might be acceptable to the Government — and it is not surprising that he should have, on the whole, been pleased to avail himself of this opportunity.

His Diary was resumed in May, and continued at irregular intervals for the rest of the year; but its contents are commonly too medical for quotation. Now and then, however, occur entries which I cannot think of omitting. For example :—

‘*Abbotsford*, *May* 23, 1830.—About a year ago I took the pet at my Diary, chiefly because I thought it made me abominably selfish ; and that by recording my gloomy fits, I encouraged their recurrence, whereas out of sight, out of mind, is the best way to get rid of them ; and now I hardly know why I take it up again—but here goes. I came here to attend Raeburn’s funeral. I am near of his kin, my great-grandfather, Walter Scott, being the second son, or first cadet of this small family. My late kinsman was also married to my aunt, a most amiable old lady. He was never kind to me, and at last utterly ungracious. Of course I never liked him, and we kept no terms. He had forgot, though, an infantine cause of quarrel, which I always remembered. When I was four or five years old, I was staying at Lessudden Place, an old mansion, the abode of this Raeburn. A large pigeon-house was almost destroyed with starlings, then a common bird, though now seldom seen. They were seized in their nests and put in a bag, and I think drowned, or thrashed to death, or put to some such end. The servants gave one to me, which I in some degree tamed, and the laird seized and wrung its neck. I flew at his throat like a wild-cat, and was torn from him with no little difficulty. Long afterwards I did him the mortal offence to recall some superiority which my father had lent to the laird to make up a qualification, which he meant to exercise by voting for Lord Minto’s interest against the Duke of Buccleuch’s. This made a total breach between two relations who had never been friends ; and though I was afterwards of considerable service to his family, he kept his ill humour, alleging, justly enough, that I did these kind actions for the sake of his wife and name, not for his benefit. I now saw him at the age of eighty-two or three deposited in the ancestral grave ; dined with my cousins, and returned to Abbotsford about eight o’clock.

‘*Edinburgh*, *May* 26.—Wrought with proofs, etc., at the Demonology, which is a cursed business to do neatly. I must finish it though. I went to the Court, from that came home, and scrambled on with half writing, half reading, half idleness, till evening. I have laid aside smoking much; and now, unless tempted by company, rarely take a cigar. I was frightened by a species of fit which I had in March [February], which took from me my power of speaking. I am told it is from the stomach. It looked woundy like palsy or apoplexy. Well, be what it will, I can stand it.

'*May* 27.—Court as usual. I am agitating a proposed retirement from the Court. As they are only to have four instead of six Clerks of Session in Scotland, it will be their interest to let me retire on a superannuation. Probably I shall make a bad bargain, and get only two-thirds of the salary, instead of three-fourths. This would be hard, but I could save between two or three hundred pounds by giving up town residence. At any rate, *jacta est alea*—Sir Robert Peel and the Advocate acquiesce in the arrangement, and Sir Robert Dundas retires alongst with me. I think the difference will be infinite in point of health and happiness. Yet I do not know. It is perhaps a violent change in the end of life to quit the walk one has trod so long, and the cursed splenetic temper which besets all men makes you value opportunities and circumstances when one enjoys them no longer. Well—"Things must be as they may," as says that great philosopher Corporal Nym.

'*June* 3.—I finished my proofs, and sent them off with copy. I saw Mr. Dickinson[1] on Tuesday; a right plain sensible man. He is so confident in my matters, that being a large creditor himself, he offers to come down, with the support of all the London creditors, to carry through any measure that can be devised for my behoof. Mr. Cadell showed him that we were four years forward in matter prepared for the press. Got Heath's Illustrations, which I daresay are finely engraved, but commonplace enough in point of art.

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[1] Mr. John Dickinson of Nash-mill, Herts, the eminent paper-maker.

'*June* 17.—Went last night to Theatre, and saw Miss Fanny Kemble's Isabella, which was a most creditable performance. It has much of the genius of Mrs. Siddons her aunt. She wants her beautiful countenance, her fine form, and her matchless dignity of step and manner. On the other hand, Miss Fanny Kemble has very expressive, though not regular features, and what is worth it all, great energy mingled with and chastised by correct taste. I suffered by the heat, lights, and exertion, and will not go back to-night, for it has purchased me a sore headache, this theatrical excursion. Besides, the play is Mrs. Beverley, and I hate to be made miserable about domestic distress; so I keep my gracious presence at home to-night, though I love and respect Miss Kemble for giving her active support to her father in his need, and preventing Covent Garden from coming down about their ears. I corrected proofs before breakfast, attended Court, but was idle in the forenoon, the headache annoying me much.

'*Blair-Adam*, *June* 18.—Our meeting cordial, but our numbers diminished; the good and very clever Lord Chief-Baron [Shepherd] is returned to his own country with more regrets than in Scotland usually attend a stranger. Will Clerk has a bad cold, Tom Thomson is detained, but the Chief Commissioner, Admiral Adam, Sir Adam, John Thomson and I, make an excellent concert.

'*June* 19.—Arose and expected to work a little, but a friend's house is not favourable; you are sure to want the book you have not brought, and are, in short, out of sorts, like the minister who could not preach out of his own pulpit. There is something fanciful in this, and something real too. After breakfast to Culross, where the veteran, Sir Robert Preston, showed us his curiosities. Life has done as much for him as most people. In his ninety-second year, he has an ample fortune, a sound understanding, not the least decay of eyes, ears, or taste, is as big as two men, and eats like three. Yet he too experiences the "*singula prædantur*," and has lost something since I last saw him.[1] If his appearance renders old age tolerable, it does not make it desirable. But I fear, when death comes, we shall be unwilling for all that to part with our bundle of sticks. Sir Robert amuses himself with repairing the old House of Culross, built by the Lord Bruce. What it is destined for is not very evident. It is too near his own mansion of Valleyfield to be useful as a residence, if indeed it could be formed into a comfortable modern house. But it is rather like a banqueting-house. Well, he follows his own fancy. We had a sumptuous cold dinner. Sir Adam grieves it was not hot, so little can war and want break a man to circumstances. The beauty of Culross consists in magnificent terraces rising on the sea beach, and commanding the opposite shore of Lothian; the house is repairing in the style of James VI. There are some fine relics of the Old Monastery, with large Saxon arches. At Anstruther I saw with pleasure the painting, by Raeburn, of my old friend Adam Rolland, Esq., who was in the external circumstances, but not in frolic or fancy, my prototype for Paul Pleydell.

'*June* 9.—Dined with the Bannatyne, where we had a lively party. Touching the songs, an old *roué* must own an improvement in the times, when all paw-paw words are omitted;—and yet, when the naughty innuendoes are gazers, one is apt to say—

> Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
> A good mouth-filling oath! and leave In sooth,
> And such protests of pepper gingerbread.[2]

I think there is more affectation than improvement in the new mode.'

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[1] Sir R. Preston, Bart. died in May 1834, aged 95.

[2] Hotspur—1st King Henry IV. Act III. Scene 1.

Not knowing how poor Maida had been replaced, Miss Edgeworth at this time offered Sir Walter a fine Irish staghound. He replies thus :—

'*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.*

EDINBURGH, 23*rd June* 1830.

'MY DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH—Nothing would be so valuable to me as the mark of kindness which you offer, and yet my kennel is so much changed since I had the pleasure of seeing you, that I must not accept of what I wished so sincerely to possess. I am the happy owner of two of the noble breed, each of gigantic size, and the gift of that sort of Highlander whom we call a High Chief, so I would hardly be justified in parting with them even to make room for your kind present, and I should have great doubts whether the mountaineers would receive the Irish stranger with due hospitality. One of them I had from poor Glengarry, who, with all wild and fierce points of his character, had a kind, honest, and warm heart. The other from a young friend, whom Highlanders call MacVourigh, and Lowlanders MacPherson of Cluny. He is a fine spirited boy, fond of his people and kind to them, and the best dancer of a Highland reel now living. I fear I must not add a third to Nimrod and Bran, having little use for them except being pleasant companions. As to labouring in their vocation, we have only one wolf which I know of, kept in a friend's menagerie near me, and no wild deer. Walter has some roebucks indeed, but Lochore is far off, and I begin to feel myself distressed at running down these innocent and beautiful creatures, perhaps because I cannot gallop so fast after them as to drown sense of the pain we are inflicting. And yet I suspect I am like the sick fox; and if my strength and twenty years could come back, I would become again a copy of my namesake, remembered by the sobriquet of Walter *ill to hauld* (to hold, that is). "But age has clawed me in its clutch,"[1] and there is no remedy for increasing disability except dying, which is an awkward score.

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[1] Hamlet, Act V. Scene 1.

'There is some chance of my retiring from my official situation upon the changes in the Court of Session. They cannot reduce my office, though they do not wish to fill it up with a new occupant. I shall be therefore *de trop*; and in these days of economy they will be better pleased to let me retire on three parts of my salary than to keep me a Clerk of Session on the whole; and small grief at our parting, as the old horse said to the broken cart. And yet, though I thought such a proposal when first made was like a Pisgah peep of Paradise, I cannot help being a little afraid of changing the habits of a long life all of a sudden and for ever. You ladies have always your work-basket and stocking-knitting to wreak an hour of tediousness upon. The routine of business serves, I suspect, for the same purpose to us male wretches; it is seldom a burden to the mind, but a something which must be done, and is done almost mechanically; and though dull judges and duller clerks, the routine of law proceedings, and law forms, are very unlike the plumed troops and the tug of war, yet the result is the same. The occupation's gone.[1] The morning, that the day's news must all be gathered from other sources—that the jokes which the principal Clerks of Session have laughed at weekly for a century, and which would not move a muscle of any other person's face, must be laid up to perish like those of Sancho in the Sierra Morena—I don't above half like forgetting all these moderate habits; and yet

Ah, freedom is a noble thing!

as says the old Scottish poet.[2] So I will cease my regrets, or lay them by to be taken up and used as arguments of comfort, in case I do not slip my cable after all, which is highly possible. Lockhart and Sophia have taken up their old residence at Chiefswood. They are very fond of the place; and I am glad also my grandchildren will be bred near the heather, for certain qualities which I think are best taught there.

[1] Othello, Act III. Scene 3.

[2] Barbour's *Bruce*.

'Let me enquire about all my friends, Mrs. Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Edgeworth, the hospitable squire, and plan of education, and all and sundry of the household of Edgeworthstown. I shall long remember our delightful days—especially those under the roof of Protestant Frank.[1]

'Have you forsworn merry England, to say nothing of our northern regions? This meditated retreat will make me more certain of being at Abbotsford the whole year; and I am now watching the ripening of those plans which I schemed five years, ten years, twenty years ago. Anne is still the Beatrix you saw her; Walter, now major, predominating with his hussars at Nottingham and Sheffield; but happily there has been no call to try Sir Toby's experiment of drawing three souls out of the body of one weaver. Ireland seems to be thriving. A friend of mine laid out £40,000 or £50,000 on an estate there, for which he gets seven per cent; so you are looking up. Old England is distressed enough;—we are well enough here—but we never feel the storm till it has passed over our neighbours. I ought to get a frank for this, but our Members are all up mending the stops of the great fiddle. The termination of the King's illness is considered as inevitable, and expected with great apprehension and anxiety. Believe me always with the greatest regard, yours,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

On the 26th of June, Sir Walter heard of the death of King George IV. with the regret of a devoted and obliged subject. He had received almost immediately before two marks of his Majesty's kind attention. Understanding that his retirement from the Court of Session was at hand, Sir William Knighton suggested to the King that Sir Walter might henceforth be more frequently in London, and that he might very fitly be placed at the head of a new commission for examining and editing the MS. collections of the exiled Princes of the House of Stuart, which had come into the King's hands on the death of the

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[1] I believe the ancestor who built the house at Edgeworthstown was distinguished by this appellation.

Cardinal of York. This Sir Walter gladly accepted, and contemplated with pleasure spending the ensuing winter in London. But another proposition, that of elevating him to the rank of Privy Councillor, was unhesitatingly declined. He felt that any increase of rank under the circumstances of diminished fortune and failing health would be idle and unsuitable, and desired his friend, the Lord Chief Commissioner, whom the King had desired to ascertain his feelings on the subject, to convey his grateful thanks, with his humble apology.

He heard of the King's death, on what was otherwise a pleasant day. The Diary says—'*June* 27. Yesterday morning I worked as usual at proofs and copy of my infernal Demonology, a task to which my poverty and not my will consents. About twelve o'clock, I went to the country to take a day's relaxation. We (*i.e.* Mr. Cadell, James Ballantyne, and I) went to Prestonpans, and getting there about one, surveyed the little village, where my aunt and I were lodgers for the sake of sea-bathing, in 1778, I believe. I knew the house of Mr. Warroch, where we lived, a poor cottage, of which the owners and their family are extinct. I recollected my juvenile ideas of dignity attendant on the large gate, a black arch which lets out upon the sea. I saw the church where I yawned under the inflictions of a Dr. M'Cormick, a name in which dulness seems to have been hereditary. I saw the links where I arranged my shells upon the turf, and swam my little skiff in the pools. Many comparisons between the man and the boy—many recollections of my kind aunt—of old George Constable, who, I think, dangled after her—of Dalgetty, a virtuous half-pay lieutenant, who swaggered his solitary walk on the parade, as he called a little open space before the same port. We went to Preston, and took refuge from a thunder-plump in the old tower. I remembered the little garden where I was crammed with gooseberries, and the fear I had of Blind Harry's Spectre of Fawdon showing his headless trunk at one of the windows. I remember also a very good-natured pretty girl (my Mary Duff) whom I laughed and romped with, and loved as children love. She was a Miss Dalrymple, daughter of Lord Westhall, a Lord of Session; was afterwards married to Anderson of Winterfield, and her daughter is now the spouse of my colleague, Robert Hamilton. So strangely are our cards shuffled. I was a mere child, and could feel none of the passion which Byron alleges, yet the recollection of this good-humoured companion of my childhood is like that of a morning dream, nor should I greatly like to dispel it by seeing the original, who must now be sufficiently time-honoured.

'Well, we walked over the field of battle; saw the Prince's Park, Cope's Road, marked by slaughter in his disastrous retreat, the thorn-tree which marks the centre of the battle, and all besides that was to be seen or supposed. We saw two broadswords, found on the field of battle, one a Highlander's, an Andrew Ferrara, another the Dragoon's sword of that day.[1] Lastly, we came to Cockenzie, where Mr. Francis Cadell, my publisher's brother, gave us a kind reception. I was especially glad to see the mother of the family, a fine old lady, who was civil to my aunt and me, and, I recollect well, used to have us to tea at Cockenzie. Curious that I should long afterwards have an opportunity to pay back this attention to her son Robert. Once more, what a kind of shuffling of the hand dealt us at our nativity. There was Mrs. F. Cadell and one or two young ladies, and some fine fat children. I should be "a Bastard to the Time" did I not tell our fare: we had a tiled whiting, a dish unknown elsewhere, so there is a bone for the gastronomers to pick. Honest John Wood, my old friend, dined with us; I only regret I cannot understand him, as he has a very powerful memory, and much curious information.[2]

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[1] The Laird of Cockenzie kindly sent these swords next day to the armoury of Abbotsford.

[2] Mr. Wood published a History of the Parish of Cramond, in 1794—an enlarged edition of Sir Robert Douglas's Peerage of Scotland, 2 vols. folio, in 1813—and a Life of the celebrated John Law, of Lauriston, in 1824. In the preface to the Cramond History he describes himself as *scopulis surdior Icari.* [Mr. Wood died 25th October 1838, in his 74th year.]

The whole day of pleasure was damped by the news of the King's death; it was fully expected, indeed, as the termination of his long illness; but he was very good to me personally, and a kind sovereign. The common people and gentry join in their sorrows. Much is owing to kindly recollections of his visit to this country, which gave all men an interest in him.'

When the term ended in July, the affair of Sir Walter's retirement was all but settled; and soon afterwards he was informed that he had ceased to be a Clerk of Session, and should thenceforth have, in lieu of his salary, etc. (£1300), an allowance of £800 per annum. This was accompanied by an intimation from the Home Secretary, that the Ministers were quite ready to grant him a pension covering the reduction in his income. Considering himself as the bond-slave of his creditors, he made known to them this proposition, and stated that it would be extremely painful to him to accept of it; and with the delicacy and generosity which throughout characterised their conduct towards him, they, without hesitation, entreated him on no account to do injury to his own feelings in such a matter as this. Few things gave him more pleasure than this handsome communication.

Just after he had taken leave of Edinburgh, as he seems to have thought for ever, he received a communication of another sort, as inopportune as any that ever reached him. His Diary for the 13th July says briefly—"I have a letter from a certain young gentleman, announcing that his sister had so far mistaken the intentions of a lame baronet nigh sixty years old, as to suppose him only prevented by modesty from stating certain wishes and hopes, etc. The party is a woman of rank, so my vanity may be satisfied. But I excused myself, with little picking upon the terms.'

During the rest of the summer and autumn his daughter and I were at Chiefswood, and saw him of course daily. Laidlaw, too, had been restored to the cottage at Kaeside; and though Tom Purdie made a dismal blank, old habits went on, and the course of life seemed little altered from what it had used to be. He looked jaded and worn before evening set in, yet very seldom departed from the strict regimen of his doctors, and often brightened up to all his former glee, though passing the bottle, and sipping toast and water. His grandchildren especially saw no change. However languid, his spirits revived at the sight of them, and the greatest pleasure he had was in pacing Douce Davie through the green lanes among his woods, with them clustered about him on ponies and donkeys, while Laidlaw, the ladies, and myself walked by, and obeyed his directions about pruning and marking trees. After the immediate alarms of the spring, it might have been even agreeable to witness this placid twilight scene, but for our knowledge that nothing could keep him from toiling many hours daily at his desk, and alas! that he was no longer sustained by the daily commendations of his printer. It was obvious, as the season advanced, that the manner in which Ballantyne communicated with him was sinking into his spirits, and Laidlaw foresaw, as well as myself, that some trying crisis of discussion could not be much longer deferred. A nervous twitching about the muscles of the mouth was always more or less discernible from the date of the attack in February; but we could easily tell, by the aggravation of that symptom, when he had received a packet from the Canongate. It was distressing indeed to think that he might, one of these days, sustain a second seizure, and be left still more helpless, yet with the same undiminished appetite for literary labour. And then, if he felt his printer's complaints so keenly, what was to be expected in the case of a plain and undeniable manifestation of disappointment on the part of the public, and consequently of the bookseller?

All this was for the inner circle. Country neighbours went and came, without, I believe, observing almost anything of what grieved the family. Nay, this autumn he was far more troubled with the invasions of strangers than he had ever been since his calamities of 1826. The astonishing success of the new editions was, as usual, doubled or trebled by rumour. The notion that he had already all but cleared off his incumbrances seems to have been widely prevalent, and no doubt his refusal of a pension tended to confirm it. Abbotsford was, for some weeks at least, besieged much as it had used to be in the golden days of 1823 and 1824; and if sometimes his guests brought animation and pleasure with them, even then the result was a legacy of redoubled lassitude. The Diary, among a very few and far-separated entries, has this :—

'*September* 5.—In spite of Resolution, I have left my Diary for some weeks, I cannot well tell why. We have had abundance of travelling Counts and Countesses, Yankees male and female, and a Yankee-Doodle-*Dandy* into the bargain—a smart young Virginia-man. But we have had friends of our own also—the Miss Ardens, young Mrs. Morritt and Anne Morritt, most agreeable visitors. Cadell came out here yesterday with his horn filled with good news. He calculates that in October the debt will be reduced to the sum of £60,000, half of its original amount. This makes me care less about the terms I retire upon. The efforts by which we have advanced thus far are new in literature, and what is gained is secure.'

Mr. Cadell's great hope, when he offered this visit, had been that the good news of the *Magnum* might induce Sir Walter to content himself with working at notes and prefaces for its coming volumes, without straining at more difficult tasks. He found his friend, however, by no means disposed to adopt such views; and suggested very kindly, and ingeniously too, by way of *mezzo-termine*, that before entering upon any new novel, he should draw up a sort of *catalogue raisonnée* of the most curious articles in his library and museum. Sir Walter grasped at this, and began next morning to dictate to Laidlaw what he designed to publish in the usual novel shape, under the title of 'Reliquiæ Trottcosienses, or the Gabions of Jonathan Oldbuck.' Nothing, as it seemed to all about him, could have suited the time better; but after a few days he said he found this was not sufficient—that he should proceed in it during *horæ subsecivæ*, but must bend himself to the composition of a romance, founded on a story which he had more than once told cursorily already, and for which he had been revolving the various titles of Robert of the Isle—Count Robert de L'Isle—and Count Robert of Paris. There was nothing to be said in reply to the decisive announcement of this purpose. The usual agreements were drawn out; and the Tale was begun.

But before I come to the results of this experiment, I must relieve the reader by Mr. Adolphus's account of some more agreeable things. The death of George IV. occasioned a general election; and the Revolution of France in July, with its rapid imitation in the Netherlands, had been succeeded by such a quickening of hope among the British Liberals, as to render this in general a scene of high excitement and desperate struggling of parties. In Teviotdale, however, all was as yet quiescent. Mr. Adolphus says:—

'One day, during my visit of 1830, I accompanied Sir Walter to Jedburgh, when the eldest son of Mr. Scott of Harden (now Lord Polwarth) was for the third time elected member for Roxburghshire. There was no contest; an opposition had been talked of, but was adjourned to some future day. The meeting in the Court-house, where the election took place, was not a very crowded or stirring scene; but among those present, as electors or spectators, were many gentlemen of the most ancient and honourable names in Roxburghshire and the adjoining counties. Sir Walter seconded the nomination. It was the first time I had heard him speak in public, and I was a little disappointed. His manner was very quiet and natural, but seemed to me too humble, and wanting in animation. His air was sagacious and reverend; his posture somewhat stooping; he rested, or rather pressed, the palm of one hand on the head of his stick, and used a very little gesticulation with the other. As he went on, his delivery acquired warmth, but it never became glowing. His points, however, were very well chosen, and his speech, perhaps, upon the whole, was such as a sensible country gentleman should have made to an assembly of his neighbours upon a subject on which they were all well agreed. Certainly the feeling of those present in favour of the candidate required no stimulus.

'The new Member was to give a dinner to the electors at three o'clock. In the meantime Sir Walter strolled round the ancient Abbey. It amused me on this and on one or two other occasions, when he was in frequented places, to see the curiosity with which some zealous stranger would hover about his line of walk or ride, to catch a view of him, though a distant one—for it was always done with caution and respect; and he was not disturbed — perhaps not displeased — by it. The dinner party was in number, I suppose, eighty or ninety, and the festival passed off with great spirit. The croupier, Mr. Baillie of Jerviswood, who had nominated the candidate in the morning, proposed, at its proper time, in a few energetic words, the health of Sir Walter Scott. All hearts were "thirsty for the noble pledge"; the health was caught up with enthusiasm; and any one who looked round must have seen with pleasure that the popularity of Sir Walter Scott—European, and more than European as it was—had its most vigorous roots at the threshold of his own home. He made a speech in acknowledgment, and this time I was not disappointed. It was rich in humour and feeling, and graced by that engaging manner of which he had so peculiar a command. One passage I remembered, for its whimsical homeliness, long after the other, and perhaps better, parts of the speech had passed from my recollection. Mr. Baillie had spoken of him as a man pre-eminent among those who had done honour and service to Scotland. He replied, that in what he had done for Scotland as a writer, he was no more entitled to the merit which had been ascribed to him than the servant who scours the "brasses" to the credit of having made them; that he perhaps had been a good housemaid to Scotland, and given the country a "rubbing up"; and in so doing might have deserved some praise for assiduity, and that was all. Afterwards, changing the subject, he spoke very beautifully and warmly of the re-elected candidate, who sat by him; alluded to the hints which had been thrown out in the morning of a future opposition and *Reform*, and ended with some verses (I believe they were Burns's *parce detorta*), pressing his hand upon the shoulder of Mr. Scott as he uttered the concluding lines,

> But we ha' tried this Border lad,
> And we'll try him yet again.[1]

'He sat down under a storm of applauses; and there were many present whose applause even he might excusably take some pride in. His eye, as he reposed himself after this little triumph, glowed with a hearty but chastened exultation on the scene before him; and when I met his look, it seemed to say—"I am glad you should see how these things pass among us."

'His constitution had in the preceding winter suffered one of those attacks which at last prematurely overthrew it. "Such a shaking hands with death" (I am told he said) "was formidable"; but there were few vestiges of it which might not be overlooked by those who were anxious not to see them; and he was more cheerful than I had sometimes found him in former years. On one of our carriage excursions, shortly after the Jedburgh dinner, his spirits actually rose to the pitch of singing, an accomplishment I had never before heard him exhibit except in chorus. We had been to Selkirk and Bowhill, and were returning homewards in one of those days so inspiriting in a hill country, when, after heavy rains, the summer bursts forth again in its full splendour. Sir Walter was in his best congenial humour. As we looked up to Carterhaugh, his conversation ran naturally upon Tamlane and Fair Janet, and the ballad recounting their adventures; then it ran upon the *Dii agrestes*, ghosts and wizards, Border anecdotes and history, the bar, his own adventures as advocate and as sheriff; and then returning to ballads, it fell upon the old ditty of Tom o' the Linn, or Thomas O'Linn, which is popular alike, I believe, in Scotland, and in some parts of England, and of which I as well as he had boyish recollections. As we compared versions he could not forbear, in the gaiety of his heart, giving out two or three of the stanzas in song. I cannot say that I ever heard this famous lyric sung to a very regular melody, but his *set* of it was extraordinary.

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[1] See Burns's ballad of *The Five Carlines*—an election squib.

'Another little incident in this morning's drive is worth remembering. We crossed several fords, and after the rain they were wide and deep. A little, long, wise-looking, rough terrier, named Spice, which ran after us, had a cough, and as often as we came to a water, Spice, by the special order of her master, was let into the carriage till we had crossed. His tenderness to his brute dependants was a striking point in the general benignity of his character. He seemed to consult not only their bodily welfare, but their feelings, in the human sense. He was a gentleman even to his dogs. His roughest rebuke to little Spice, when she was inclined to play the wag with a sheep, was, "Ha! fie! fie!" It must be owned that his "tail" (as his retinue of dogs was called at Abbotsford), though very docile and unobtrusive animals in the house, were sometimes a little wild in their frolics out of doors. One day when I was walking with Sir Walter and Miss Scott, we passed a cottage, at the door of which sat on one side a child, and on the other a slumbering cat. Nimrod bounded from us in great gaiety, and the unsuspecting cat had scarcely time to squall before she was demolished. The poor child set up a dismal wail. Miss Scott was naturally much distressed, and Sir Walter a good deal out of countenance. However, he put an end to the subject by saying, with an assumed stubbornness, "Well! the cat is worried"; but his purse was in his hand; Miss Scott was despatched to the house, and I am very sure it was not his fault if the cat had a poor funeral. In the confusion of the moment, I am afraid the culprit went off without even a reprimand.

'Except in this trifling instance (and it could hardly be called an exception), I cannot recollect seeing Sir

Walter Scott surprised out of his habitual equanimity. Never, I believe, during the opportunities I had of observing him, did I hear from him an acrimonious tone, or see a shade of ill-humour on his features. In a phlegmatic person this serenity might have been less remarkable, but it was surprising in one whose mind was so susceptible, and whose voice and countenance were so full of expression. It was attributable, I think, to a rare combination of qualities ;—thoroughly cultivated manners, great kindness of disposition, great patience and self-control, an excellent flow of spirits, and lastly, that steadfastness of nerve, which, even in the inferior animals, often renders the most powerful and resolute creature the most placid and forbearing. Once, when he was exhibiting some weapons, a gentleman, after differing from him as to the comparative merits of two sword-blades, inadvertently flourished one of them almost into Sir Walter's eye. I looked quickly towards him, but could not see in his face the least sign of shrinking, or the least approach to a frown. No one, however, could for a moment infer from this evenness of manner and temper, that he was a man with whom an intentional liberty could be taken ; and I suppose very few persons during his life ever thought of making the experiment. If it happened at any time that some trivial *étourderie* in conversation required at his hand a slight application of the rein, his gentle *explaining* tone was an appeal to good taste which no common wilfulness could have withstood.

'Two or three times at most during my knowledge of him do I recollect hearing him utter a downright oath, and then it was not in passion or upon personal provocation, nor was the anathema levelled at any individual. It was rather a concise expression of sentiment, than a malediction. In one instance it was launched at certain improvers of the town of Edinburgh ; in another it was bestowed very evenly upon all political parties in France, shortly after the *glorious days* of July 1830.'

As one consequence of these 'glorious days,' the unfortunate Charles X. was invited by the English Government to resume his old quarters at Holyrood; and among many other things that about this time vexed and mortified Scott, none gave him more pain than to hear that the popular feeling in Edinburgh had been so much exacerbated against the fallen monarch (especially by an ungenerous article in the great literary organ of the place), that his reception there was likely to be rough and insulting. Sir Walter thought that on such an occasion his voice might, perhaps, be listened to. He knew his countrymen well in their strength, as well as in their weakness, and put forth this touching appeal to their better feelings, in Ballantyne's newspaper for the 20th of October:—

'We are enabled to announce, from authority, that Charles of Bourbon, the ex-King of France, is about to become once more our fellow-citizen, though probably for only a limited space, and is presently about to repair to Edinburgh, in order again to inhabit the apartments which he long ago occupied in Holyrood House. This temporary arrangement, it is said, has been made in compliance with his own request, with which our benevolent Monarch immediately complied, willing to consult, in every respect possible, the feelings of a Prince under the pressure of misfortunes, which are perhaps the more severe, if incurred through bad advice, error, or rashness. The attendants of the late sovereign will be reduced to the least possible number, and consist chiefly of ladies and children, and his style of life will be strictly retired. In these circumstances, it would be unworthy of us as Scotsmen, or as men, if this most unfortunate family should meet a word or look from the meanest individual tending to aggravate feelings, which must be at present so acute as to receive injury from insults which in other times could be passed with perfect disregard.

'His late opponents in his kingdom have gained the applause of Europe for the generosity with which they have used their victory, and the respect which they have paid to themselves in moderation toward an enemy. It would be a gross contrast to that part of their conduct which has been most generally applauded, were we, who are strangers to the strife, to affect a deeper resentment than those it concerned closely.

'Those who can recollect the former residence of this unhappy Prince in our northern capital, cannot but remember the unobtrusive and quiet manner in which his little court was then conducted; and now, still further restricted and diminished, he may naturally expect to be received with civility and respect by a nation whose good-will he has done nothing to forfeit. Whatever may have been his errors towards his own subjects, we cannot but remember, in his adversity, that he did not in his prosperity forget that Edinburgh had extended her hospitality towards him, but, at the period when the fires consumed so much of the city, sent a princely benefaction to the sufferers, with a letter which made it more valuable, by stating the feelings towards the city of the then royal donor. We also state, without hazard of contradiction, that his attention to individuals connected with this city was uniformly and handsomely rendered to those entitled to claim them. But he never did or could display a more flattering confidence, than when he shows that the recollections of his former asylum here have inclined him a second time to return to the place where he then found refuge.

'If there can be any who retain angry or invidious recollections of late events in France, they ought to remark that the ex-Monarch has, by his abdication, renounced the conflict into which, perhaps, he was engaged by bad advisers; that he can no longer be the object of resentment to the brave, but remains to all the most striking emblem of the mutability of human affairs which our mutable times have afforded. He may say, with our own deposed Richard—

> With mine own tears I washed away my balm,
> With mine own hands I gave away my crown,
> With my own tongue deny mine sacred state.[1]

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[1] King Richard II. Act IV. Scene 1.

He brings among us his "grey discrowned head"; and in "a nation of gentlemen," as we were emphatically termed by the very highest authority,[1] it is impossible, I trust, to find a man mean enough to insult the slightest hair of it.

'It is impossible to omit stating, that if angry recollections or keen party feelings should make any person consider the exiled and deposed Monarch as a subject of resentment, no token of such feelings could be exhibited without the greater part of the pain being felt by the helpless females, of whom the Duchess of Angoulême, in particular, has been so long distinguished by her courage and her misfortunes.

'The person who writes these few lines is leaving his native city, never to return as a permanent resident. He has some reason to be proud of distinctions received from his fellow-citizens; and he has not the slightest doubt that the taste and good feeling of those whom he will still term so, will dictate to them the quiet, civil, and respectful tone of feeling, which will do honour both to their heads and their hearts, which have seldom been appealed to in vain.

'The Frenchman Melinet, in mentioning the refuge afforded by Edinburgh to Henry VI. in his distress, records it as the most hospitable town in Europe. It it a testimony to be proud of, and sincerely do I hope there is little danger of forfeiting it upon the present occasion.'

The effect of this manly admonition was even more complete than the writer had anticipated. The royal exiles were received with perfect decorum, which their modest bearing to all classes, and unobtrusive though magnificent benevolence to the poor, ere long converted into a feeling of deep and affectionate respectfulness. During their stay in Scotland, the King took more than one opportunity of conveying to Sir Walter his gratitude for this salutary interference on his behalf. The ladies of the royal family had a curiosity to see Abbotsford, but being aware of his reduced health and wealth, took care to visit the place when he was known to be from home. Several French noblemen of the train, however, paid him their respects personally. I remember with particular pleasure a couple of days that the Duke of Laval-Montmorency spent with him : he was also much gratified with a visit from Marshal Bourmont, though unfortunately that came after his ailments had much advanced. The Marshal was accompanied by the Baron d'Haussez, one of the Polignac Ministry, whose published account of his residence in this country contains no specimen of vain imbecility more pitiable than the page he gives to Abbotsford. So far from comprehending anything of his host's character or conversation, the Baron had not even eyes to observe that he was in a sorely dilapidated condition of bodily health. The reader will perceive by and by, that he had had another *fit* only a few days before he received these strangers ; and that, moreover, he was engaged at the moment in a most painful correspondence with his printer and bookseller.

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[1] This was the expression of King George IV. at the close of the first day he spent in Scotland.

I conclude this chapter with a letter to Lady Louisa Stuart, who had, it seems, formed some erroneous guesses about the purport of the forthcoming Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft. That volume had been some weeks out of hand—but, for booksellers' reasons, it was not published until Christmas.

'*To the Right Hon. Lady Louisa Stuart.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *October* 31, 1830.

'MY DEAR LADY LOUISA — I come before your Ladyship for once, in the character of Not Guilty. I am a wronged man, who deny, with Lady Teazle, *the butler and the coach-horse.* Positively, in sending a blow to explode old and worn-out follies, I could not think I was aiding and abetting those of this—at least I had no purpose of doing so. Your Ladyship cannot think me such an owl as to pay more respect to animal magnetism, or scullology—I forget its learned name—or any other *ology* of the present day. The sailors have an uncouth proverb that every man must eat a peck of dirt in the course of his life, and thereby reconcile themselves to swallow unpalatable messes. Even so say I: every age must swallow a certain deal of superstitious nonsense; only, observing the variety which nature seems to study through all her works, each generation takes its nonsense, as heralds say, *with a difference.* I was early behind the scenes, having been in childhood patient of no less a man than the celebrated Dr. Graham, the great quack of that olden day. I had—being, as Sir Hugh Evans says, a fine sprag boy—a shrewd idea that his magnetism was all humbug; but Dr. Graham, though he used a different method, was as much admired in his day as any of the French fops. I did once think of turning on the modern mummers, but I did not want to be engaged in so senseless a controversy, which would, nevertheless, have occupied some time and trouble. The inference was pretty plain, that the same reasons which explode the machinery of witches and ghosts proper to our ancestors, must be destructive of the supernatural nonsense of our own days.

'Your acquaintance with Shakspeare is intimate, and you remember why and when it is said—

He words me, girl, he words me.[1]

Our modern men of the day have done this to the country. They have devised a new phraseology to convert good into evil, and evil into good, and the ass's ears of John Bull are gulled with it as if words alone made crime or virtue. Have they a mind to excuse the tyranny of Buonaparte? why, the Lord love you, he only squeezed into his government a grain too much of civilisation. The fault of Robespierre was too active liberalism—a noble error. Thus the most bloodthirsty anarchy is glossed over by opening the account under a new name.

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[1] Antony and Cleopatra, Act V. Scene 2.

The varnish might be easily scraped off all this trumpery; and I think my friends *the brave Belges* are like to lead to the conclusion that the old names of murder and fire-raising are still in fashion. But what is worse, the natural connexion between the higher and lower classes is broken. The former reside abroad, and become gradually, but certainly, strangers to their country's laws, habits, and character. The tenant sees nothing of them but the creditor for rent, following on the heels of the creditor for taxes. Our Ministers dissolve the yeomanry, almost the last tie which held the laird and the tenant together. The best and worthiest are squabbling together, like a mutinous crew in a sinking vessel, who make the question, not how they are to get her off the rocks, but by whose fault she came on them. In short—but I will not pursue any further the picture more frightful than any apparition in my Demonology. Would to God I could believe it ideal! I have confidence still in the Duke of Wellington, but even he has sacrificed to the great deity of humbug, and what shall we say to meaner and more ordinary minds? God avert evil! and, what is next best, in mercy remove those who could only witness without preventing it! Perhaps I am somewhat despondent in all this. But totally retired from the world as I now am, depression is a natural consequence of so calamitous a prospect as politics now present. The only probable course of safety would be a confederacy between the good and the honest; and they are so much divided by petty feuds, that I see little chance of it.

'I will send this under Lord Montagu's frank, for it is no matter how long such a roll of lamentation may be in reaching your Ladyship. I do not think it at all likely that I shall be in London next spring, although I suffer Sophia to think so.—I remain, in all my bad humour, ever your Ladyship's most obedient and faithful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.'

CHAPTER LXXIX

Winter at Abbotsford—Parliamentary Reform in agitation—William Laidlaw—John Nicolson—Mrs. Street—Fit of Apoplexy in November—Count Robert of Paris—A Fourth Epistle of Malagrowther written—and suppressed—Unpleasant discussions with Ballantyne and Cadell—Novel resumed—Second Dividend to Creditors, and their gift of the Library, etc., at Abbotsford—Last Will executed in Edinburgh—Fortune's Mechanism—Letter on Politics to the Hon. H. F. Scott—Address for the County of Selkirk written—and rejected by the Freeholders—County Meeting at Jedburgh—Speech on Reform—Scott insulted—Mr. F. Grant's Portrait.

OCT. 1830—APRIL 1832

THE reader has already seen that Sir Walter had many misgivings in contemplating his final retirement from the situation he had occupied for six-and-twenty years in the Court of Session. Such a breach in old habits is always a serious experiment; but in his case it was very particularly so, because it involved his losing, during the winter months, when men most need society, the intercourse of almost all that remained to him of dear familiar friends. He had besides a love for the very stones of Edinburgh, and the thought that he was never again to sleep under a roof of his own in his native city, cost him many a pang. But he never alludes either in his Diary or in his letters (nor do I remember that he ever did so in conversation) to the circumstance which, far more than all besides, occasioned care and regret in the bosom of his family. However he might cling to the notion that his recent ailments sprung merely from a disordered stomach, they had dismissed that dream, and the heaviest of their thoughts was, that he was fixing himself in the country just when his health, perhaps his life, might depend any given hour on the immediate presence of a surgical hand. They reflected that the only medical practitioner resident within three miles of him might, in case of another seizure, come too late, even although the messenger should find him at home; but that his practice extended over a wide range of thinly peopled country, and that at the hour of need he might as probably be half a day's journey off as at Melrose. We would fain have persuaded him that his library, catalogues, and other papers, had fallen into such confusion, that he ought to have some clever young student in the house during the winter to arrange them; and had he taken the suggestion in good part, a medical student would of course have been selected. But, whether or not he suspected our real motive, he would listen to no such plan; and his friendly surgeon (Mr. James Clarkson) then did the best he could for us, by instructing a confidential domestic, privately, in the use of the lancet. This was John Nicolson—a name never to be mentioned by any of Scott's family without respect and gratitude. He had been in the household from his boyhood, and was about this time (poor Dalgleish retiring from weak health) advanced to the chief place in it. Early and continued kindness had made a very deep impression on this fine handsome young man's warm heart; he possessed intelligence, good sense, and a calm temper; and the courage and dexterity which Sir Walter had delighted to see him display in sports and pastimes, proved henceforth of inestimable service to the master whom he regarded, I verily believe, with the love and reverence of a son. Since I have reached the period at which human beings owe so much to ministrations of this class, I may as well name by the side of Nicolson, Miss Scott's maid, Mrs. Celia Street; a young person whose unwearied zeal, coupled with a modest tact that stamped her one of Nature's gentlewomen, contributed hardly less to the comfort of Sir Walter and his children during the brief remainder of his life.[1]

Affliction, as it happened, lay heavy at this time on the kind house of Huntly-Burn also. The eldest Miss Fergusson was on her deathbed ; and thus, when my wife and I were obliged to move southwards at the beginning of winter, Sir Walter was left almost entirely dependent on his daughter Anne, William Laidlaw, and the worthy domestics whom I have been naming. Mr. Laidlaw attended him occasionally as amanuensis when his fingers were chilblained, and often dined as well as breakfasted with him : and Miss Scott well knew that in all circumstances she might lean to Laidlaw with the confidence of a niece or a daughter.

A more difficult and delicate task never devolved upon any man's friend, than he had about this time to encounter. He could not watch Scott from hour to hour —above all, he could not write to his dictation, without gradually, slowly, most reluctantly taking home to his bosom the conviction that the mighty mind, which he had worshipped through more than thirty years of intimacy, had lost something, and was daily losing something more, of its energy. The faculties were there, and each of them was every now and then displaying itself in its full vigour ; but the sagacious judgment, the brilliant fancy, the unrivalled memory, were all subject to occasional eclipse—

> Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
> And an uncertain warbling made.[2]

Ever and anon he paused and looked round him, like one half waking from a dream, mocked with shadows. The sad bewilderment of his gaze showed a momentary consciousness that, like Samson in the lap of the Philistine, 'his strength was passing from him, and he was becoming weak like unto other men.' Then came the strong effort of aroused will—the cloud dispersed as if before an irresistible current of purer air—all was bright and serene as of old—and then it closed again in yet deeper darkness.

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[1] On Sir Walter's death, Nicolson passed into the service of Mr. Morritt at Rokeby, where he is now butler. Mrs. Street remained in my house till 1836, when she married Mr. Griffiths, a respectable brewer at Walworth.

[2] Introduction, Lay of the Last Minstrel.

During the early part of this winter the situation of Cadell and Ballantyne was hardly less painful, and still more embarrassing. What doubly and trebly perplexed them was, that while the MS. sent for press seemed worse every budget, Sir Walter's private letters to them, more especially on points of business, continued as clear in thought, and almost so in expression, as formerly; full of the old shrewdness, and firmness, and manly kindness, and even of the old good-humoured pleasantry. About them, excepting the staggering penmanship, and here and there one word put down obviously for another, there was scarcely anything to indicate decayed vigour. It is not surprising that poor Ballantyne, in particular, should have shrunk from the notion that anything was amiss,—except the choice of an unfortunate subject, and the indulgence of more than common carelessness and rapidity in composition. He seems to have done so, as he would from some horrid suggestion of the Devil; and accordingly obeyed his natural sense of duty, by informing Sir Walter, in plain terms, that he considered the opening chapters of Count Robert as decidedly inferior to anything that had ever before come from that pen. James appears to have dwelt chiefly on the hopelessness of any Byzantine fable; and he might certainly have appealed to a long train of examples for the fatality which seems to hang over every attempt to awaken anything like a lively interest about the persons and manners of the generation in question; the childish forms and bigotries, the weak pomps and drivelling pretensions, the miserable plots and treacheries, the tame worn-out civilisation of those European Chinese. The epoch on which Scott had fixed was, however, one that brought these doomed slaves of vanity and superstition into contact with the vigorous barbarism both of western Christendom and the advancing Ottoman. Sir Walter had, years before, been struck with its capabilities;[1] and who dares to say that, had he executed the work when he sketched the outline of its plan, he might not have achieved as signal a triumph over all critical prejudices, as he had done when he rescued Scottish romance from the mawkish degradation in which Waverley found it?

In himself and his own affairs there was enough to alarm and perplex him and all who watched him; but the aspect of the political horizon also pressed more heavily upon his spirit than it had ever done before. All the evils which he had apprehended from the rupture among the Tory leaders in the beginning of 1827, were now, in his opinion, about to be consummated. The high Protestant party, blinded by their resentment of the abolition of the Test Act and the Roman Catholic disabilities, seemed willing to run any risk for the purpose of driving the Duke of Wellington from the helm. The general election, occasioned by the demise of the Crown, was held while the successful revolts in France and Belgium were fresh and uppermost in every mind, and furnished the *Liberal* candidates with captivating topics, of which they eagerly availed themselves. The result had considerably strengthened the old opposition in the House of Commons; and a single vote, in which the ultra-Tories joined the Whigs, was considered by the Ministry as so ominous, that they immediately retired from office. The succeeding cabinet of Earl Grey included names identified, in Scott's view, with the wildest rage of innovation. Their first step was to announce a bill of Parliamentary Reform on a large scale, for which it was soon known they had secured the warm personal support of King William IV.; a circumstance the probability of which had, as we have seen, been contemplated by Sir Walter during the last illness of the Duke of York. Great discontent prevailed, meanwhile, throughout the labouring classes of many districts, both commercial and rural. Every newspaper teemed with details of riots and incendiarism; and the selection of such an epoch of impatience and turbulence for a legislative experiment of the extremest difficulty and delicacy—one, in fact, infinitely more important than had ever before been agitated within the forms of the constitution—was perhaps regarded by most grave and retired men with feelings near akin to those of the anxious and melancholy invalid at Abbotsford. To annoy him additionally, he found many eminent persons, who had hitherto avowed politics of his own colour, renouncing all their old tenets, and joining the cry of Reform, which to him sounded Revolution, as keenly as the keenest of those who had been through life considered apostles of Republicanism. And I must also observe, that as, notwithstanding his own steady Toryism, he had never allowed political differences to affect his private feelings towards friends and companions, so it now happened that among the few with whom he had daily intercourse there was hardly one he could look to for sympathy in his present reflections and anticipations. The affectionate Laidlaw had always been a stout Whig; he now hailed the coming changes as the beginning of a political millennium. Ballantyne, influenced probably by his new ghostly counsellors, was by degrees leaning to a similar view of things. Cadell, his bookseller, and now the principal confidant and assistant from week to week in all his plans and speculations, was a cool, inflexible specimen of the national character, and had always, I presume, considered the Tory creed as a piece of weakness—to be pardoned, indeed, in a poet and an antiquary, but at best pitied in men of any other class.

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[1] See his Essay on Romance for the Encyclopædia Britannica.

Towards the end of November, Sir Walter had another slight touch of apoplexy. He recovered himself without assistance; but again consulted his physicians in Edinburgh, and by their advice adopted a still greater severity of regimen.

The reader will now understand what his frame and condition of health and spirits were, at the time when he received from Ballantyne a decided protest against the novel on which he was struggling to fix the shattered energies of his memory and fancy.

'*To Mr. James Ballantyne, Printer, Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, 8*th Dec.* 1830.

'MY DEAR JAMES—If I were like other authors, as I flatter myself I am not, I should "send you an order on my treasurer for a hundred ducats, wishing you all prosperity and a little more taste";[1] but having never supposed that any abilities I ever had were of a perpetual texture, I am glad when friends tell me what I might be long in finding out myself. Mr. Cadell will show you what I have written to him. My present idea is to go abroad for a few months, if I hold together as long. So ended the Fathers of the Novel—Fielding and Smollett—and it would be no unprofessional finish for yours,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To R. Cadell, Esq., Bookseller, Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, 8*th Dec.* 1830.

'MY DEAR SIR—Although we are come near to a point to which every man knows he must come, yet I acknowledge I thought I might have put it off for two or three years; for it is hard to lose one's power of working when you have perfect leisure for it. I do not view James Ballantyne's criticism, although his kindness may not make him sensible of it, so much as an objection to the particular topic, which is merely fastidious, as to my having failed to please him, an anxious and favourable judge, and certainly a very good one. It would be losing words to say that the names are really no objection, or that they might be in some degree smoothed off by adopting more modern Grecian. This is odd. I have seen when a play or novel would have been damned by introduction of Macgregors or Macgrouthers, or others, which you used to read as a preface to Fairntosh whisky, on every spirit shop—yet these have been wrought into heroes. James is, with many other kindly critics, perhaps in the predicament of an honest drunkard when crop-sick the next morning, who does not ascribe the malady to the wine he has drunk, but to having tasted some particular dish at dinner which disagreed with his stomach. The fact is, I have not only written a great deal, but, as Bobadil teaches his companions to fence, I have taught a hundred gentlemen to write nearly as well, if not altogether so, as myself.

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[1] Archbishop of Grenada, in Gil Blas.

'Now, such being my belief, I have lost, it is plain, the power of interesting the country, and ought, in justice to all parties, to retire, while I have some credit. But this is an important step, and I will not be obstinate about it, if necessary. I would not act hastily, and still think it right to set up at least half a volume. The subject is essentially an excellent one. If it brings to my friend J. B. certain prejudices not unconnected, perhaps, with his old preceptor Mr. Whale, we may find ways of obviating this; but frankly, I cannot think of flinging aside the half-finished volume, as if it were a corked bottle of wine. If there is a decisive resolution for laying aside Count Robert (which I almost wish I had called Anna Comnena), I shall not easily prevail on myself to begin another.

'I may perhaps take a trip to the Continent for a year or two, if I find Othello's occupation gone, or rather Othello's *reputation*. James seems to have taken his bed upon it—yet has seen Pharsalia. I hope your cold is getting better. I am tempted to say, as Hotspur says of his father—

> Zounds! how hath he the leisure to be sick?[1]

There is a very material consideration how a failure of Count Robert might affect the Magnum, which is a main object. So this is all at present from, dear sir, yours very faithfully,
WALTER SCOTT.'

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[1] 1st King Henry IV. Act IV. Scene 1.

To the Same.

'Abbotsford, 9*th Dec.* 1830.

'My dear Cadell—I send you sheet B of the unlucky Count—it will do little harm to correct it, whether we ultimately use it or no ; for the rest we must *do* as we *dow*, as my mother used to say. I could reduce many expenses in a foreign country, especially equipage and living, which in this country I could not do so well. But it is matter of serious consideration, and we have time before us to think. I write to you rather than Ballantyne, because he is not well, and I look on you as hardened against wind and weather, whereas

> Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
> And he retires.[1]

But we must brave bad weather as well as bear it.

'I send a volume of the interleaved Magnum. I know not whether you will carry on that scheme or not at present.—I am yours sincerely, Walter Scott.

'*P.S.*—I expect Marshal Bourmont and a French Minister, Baron d'Haussez, here to-day, to my no small discomfort, as you may believe ; for I would rather be alone.'

'*To the Same.*

'Abbotsford, 12*th Dec.* 1830.

'My dear Sir—I am much obliged for your kind letter, and have taken a more full review of the whole affair than I was able to do at first. There were many circumstances in the matter which you and J. B. could not be aware of, and which, if you were aware of, might have influenced your judgment, which had, and yet have a most powerful effect upon mine. The deaths of both my father and mother have been preceded by a paralytic shock. My father survived it for nearly two years—a melancholy respite, and not to be desired. I was alarmed with Miss Young's morning visit, when, as you know, I lost my speech. The medical people said it was from the stomach, which might be ; but while there is a doubt on a point so alarming, you will not wonder that the subject, or, to use Hare's *lingo*, the *shot*, should be a little anxious. I restricted all my creature comforts, which were never excessive, within a single cigar and a small wine-glass of spirits per day. But one night last month, when I had a friend with me, I had a slight vertigo when going to bed, and fell down in my dressing-room, though but for one instant. Upon this I wrote to Dr. Abercrombie, and in consequence of his advice, I have restricted myself yet farther, and have cut off the cigar, and almost half of the mountain-dew. Now, in the midst of all this, I began my work with as much attention as I could ; and having taken pains with my story, I find it is not relished, nor indeed tolerated, by those who have no interest in condemning it, but a strong interest in putting even a face upon their consciences. Was not this, in the circumstances, a damper to an invalid, already afraid that the sharp edge might be taken off his intellect, though he was not himself sensible of that ? and did it not seem, of course, that nature was rather calling for repose than for further efforts in a very exciting and feverish style of composition ? It would have been the height of injustice and cruelty to impute want of friendship or sympathy to J. B.'s discharge of a doubtful, and I am sensible, a perilous task. True,

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[1] Othello, Act V. Scene 2.

The first bringer of unwelcome news
Hath but a losing office—[1]

and it is a failing in the temper of the most equal-minded men, that we find them liable to be less pleased with the tidings that they have fallen short of their aim, than if they had been told they had hit the mark ; but I never had the least thought of blaming him, and indeed my confidence in his judgment is the most forcible part of the whole affair. It is the consciousness of his sincerity which makes me doubt whether I can proceed with the County Paris. I am most anxious to do justice to all concerned, and yet, for the soul of me, I cannot see what is likely to turn out for the best. I might attempt the Perilous Castle of Douglas, but I fear the subject is too much used, and that I might again fail in it. Then being idle will never do, for a thousand reasons: All this I am thinking of till I am half sick. I wish James, who gives such stout advice when he thinks we are wrong, would tell us how to put things right. One is tempted to cry, "Wo worth thee! is there no help in thee?" Perhaps it may be better to take no resolution till we all meet together.

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[1] 2nd King Henry IV. Act I. Scene 1.

'I certainly am quite decided to fulfil all my engagements, and, so far as I can, discharge the part of an honest man; and if anything can be done meantime for the Magnum, I shall be glad to do it.

'I trust James and you will get afloat next Saturday. You will think me like Murray in the farce—"I eat well, drink well, and sleep well, but that's all, Tom, that's all."[1] We will wear the thing through one way or other if we were once afloat; but you see all this is a scrape.—Yours truly,
W. Scott.'

This letter, Mr. Cadell says, 'struck both James B. and myself with dismay.' They resolved to go out to Abbotsford, but not for a few days, because a general meeting of the creditors was at hand, and there was reason to hope that its results would enable them to appear as the bearers of sundry pieces of good news. Meantime, Sir Walter himself rallied considerably, and resolved, by way of testing his powers, while the novel hung suspended, to write a fourth epistle of Malachi Malagrowther on the public affairs of the period. The announcement of a political dissertation, at such a moment of universal excitement, and from a hand already trembling under the misgivings of a fatal malady, might well have filled Cadell and Ballantyne with new 'dismay,' even had they both been prepared to adopt, in the fullest extent, such views of the dangers of our state, and the remedies for them, as their friend was likely to dwell upon. They agreed that whatever they could safely do to avert this experiment must be done. Indeed they were both equally anxious to find, if it could be found, the means of withdrawing him from all literary labour, save only that of annotating his former novels. But they were not the only persons who had been, and then were, exerting all their art for that same purpose. His kind and skilful physicians, Drs. Abercrombie and Ross of Edinburgh, had over and over preached the same doctrine, and assured him, that if he persisted in working his brain, nothing could prevent his malady from recurring, ere long, in redoubled severity. He answered—'As for bidding me not work, Molly might as well put the kettle on the fire, and say, *now*, *don't boil*.' To myself, when I ventured to address him in a similar strain, he replied —'I understand you, and I thank you from my heart, but I must tell you at once how it is with me. I am not sure that I am quite myself in all things; but I am sure that in one point there is no change. I mean, that I foresee distinctly that if I were to be idle I should go mad. In comparison to this, death is no risk to shrink from.'

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[1] Sir Mark Chace, in the farce of 'A Roland for an Oliver.'

The meeting of trustees and creditors took place on the 17th—Mr. George Forbes (brother to the late Sir William) in the chair. There was then announced another dividend on the Ballantyne estate of three shillings in the pound — thus reducing the original amount of the debt to about £54,000. It had been not unnaturally apprehended that the convulsed state of politics might have checked the sale of the *Magnum Opus*; but this does not seem to have been the case to any extent worth notice. The meeting was numerous—and, not contented with a renewed vote of thanks to their debtor, they passed unanimously the following resolution, which was moved by Mr. (now Sir James) Gibson-Craig, and seconded by the late Mr. Thomas Allan—both, by the way, leading Whigs :—'That Sir Walter Scott be requested to accept of his furniture, plate, linens, paintings, library, and curiosities of every description, as the best means the creditors have of expressing their very high sense of his most honourable conduct, and in grateful acknowledgment for the unparalleled and most successful exertions he has made, and continues to make, for them.'

Sir Walter's letter, in answer to the chairman's communication, was as follows :—

'*To George Forbes, Esq., Edinburgh.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *December* 18, 1830.

'MY DEAR SIR—I was greatly delighted with the contents of your letter, which not only enables me to eat with my own spoons, and study my own books, but gives me the still higher gratification of knowing that my conduct has been approved by those who were concerned.

'The best thanks which I can return is by continuing my earnest and unceasing attention—which, with a moderate degree of the good fortune which has hitherto attended my efforts, may enable me to bring these affairs to a fortunate conclusion. This will be the best way in which I can show my sense of the kind and gentlemanlike manner in which the meeting have acted.

'To yourself, my dear sir, I can only say, that good news become doubly acceptable when transmitted through a friendly channel; and considering my long and intimate acquaintance with your excellent brother and father, as well as yourself and other members of your family, your letter must be valuable in reference to the hand from which it comes, as well as to the information which it contains.

'I am sensible of your uniform kindness, and the present instance of it.—Very much, my dear sir, your obliged humble servant, WALTER SCOTT.'

On the 18th, Cadell and Ballantyne proceeded to Abbotsford, and found Sir Walter in a placid state—having evidently been much soothed and gratified with the tidings from Edinburgh. His whole appearance was greatly better than they had ventured to anticipate; and deferring literary questions till the morning, he made this gift from his creditors the chief subject of his conversation. He said it had taken a heavy load off his mind: he apprehended that, even if his future works should produce little money, the profits of the *Magnum*, during a limited number of years, with the sum which had been insured on his life, would be sufficient to obliterate the remaining moiety of the Ballantyne debt: he considered the library and museum now conveyed to him as worth at the least £10,000, and this would enable him to make some provision for his younger children. He said that he designed to execute his last will without delay, and detailed to his friends all the particulars which the document ultimately embraced. He mentioned to them that he had recently received, through the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam, a message from the new King, intimating his Majesty's disposition to keep in mind his late brother's kind intentions with regard to Charles Scott; and altogether his talk, though grave, and on grave topics, was the reverse of melancholy.

Next morning, in Sir Walter's study, Ballantyne read aloud the political essay—which had (after the old fashion) grown to an extent far beyond what the author contemplated when he began his task. To print it in the Weekly Journal, as originally proposed, would now be hardly compatible with the limits of that paper: Sir Walter had resolved on a separate publication.

I believe no one ever saw this performance but the bookseller, the printer, and William Laidlaw; and I cannot pretend to have gathered any clear notion of its contents, except that the *panacea* was the re-imposition of the income tax; and that after much reasoning in support of this measure, Sir Walter attacked the principle of Parliamentary Reform *in toto*. We need hardly suppose that he advanced any objections which would seem new to the students of the debates in both Houses during 1831 and 1832; his logic carried no conviction to the breast of his faithful amanuensis; but Mr. Laidlaw assures me, nevertheless, that in his opinion no composition of Sir Walter's happiest day contained anything more admirable than the bursts of indignant and pathetic eloquence which here and there 'set off a halting argument.'

The critical arbiters, however, concurred in condemning the production. Cadell spoke out; he assured Sir Walter, that from not being in the habit of reading the newspapers and periodical works of the day, he had fallen behind the common rate of information on questions of practical policy; that the views he was enforcing had been already expounded by many Tories, and triumphantly answered by organs of the Liberal party; but that, be the intrinsic value and merit of these political doctrines what they might, he was quite certain that to put them forth at that season would be a measure of extreme danger for the author's personal interest: that it would throw a cloud over his general popularity, array a hundred active pens against any new work of another class that might soon follow, and perhaps even interrupt the hitherto splendid success of the Collection on which so much depended. On all these points Ballantyne, though with hesitation and diffidence, professed himself to be of Cadell's opinion. There ensued a scene of a very unpleasant sort; but by and by a kind of compromise was agreed to:—the plan of a separate pamphlet, with the well-known *nom de guerre* of Malachi, was dropped; and Ballantyne was to stretch his columns so as to find room for the lucubration, adopting all possible means to mystify the public as to its parentage. This was the understanding when the conference broke up; but the unfortunate manuscript was soon afterwards committed to the flames. James Ballantyne accompanied the proof-sheet with many minute criticisms on the conduct as well as expression of the argument: the author's temper gave way—and the commentary shared the fate of the text.

Mr. Cadell opens a very brief account of this affair with expressing his opinion, that 'Sir Walter never recovered it'; and he ends with an altogether needless apology for his own part in it. He did only what was his duty by his venerated friend; and he did it, I doubt not, as kindly in manner as in spirit. Even if the fourth Epistle of Malachi had been more like its precursors than I can well suppose it to have been, nothing could have been more unfortunate for Sir Walter than to come forward at that moment as a prominent antagonist of Reform. Such an appearance might very possibly have had the consequences to which the bookseller pointed in his remonstrance; but at all events it must have involved him in a maze of replies and rejoinders; and I think it too probable that some of the fiery disputants of the periodical press, if not of St. Stephen's Chapel, might have been ingenious enough to connect any real or fancied flaws in his argument with those circumstances in his personal condition which had for some time been darkening his own reflections with dim auguries of the fate of Swift and Marlborough. His reception of Ballantyne's affectionate candour may suggest what the effect of really hostile criticism would have been. The end was, that seeing how much he stood in need of some comfort, the printer and bookseller concurred in urging him not to despair of Count Robert. They assured him that he had attached too much importance to what had formerly been said about the defects of its opening chapters; and he agreed to resume the novel, which neither of them ever expected he would live to finish. 'If we did wrong,' says Cadell, 'we did it for the best: we felt that to have spoken out as fairly on this as we had done on the other subject, would have been to make ourselves the bearers of a death-warrant.' I hope there are not many men who would have acted otherwise in their painful situation.

On the 20th, after a long interval, Sir Walter once more took up his Journal: but the entries are few and short:—*e.g.*

'*December* 20, 1830.—Vacation and session are now the same to me. The long remove must then be looked to for the final signal to break up, and that is a serious thought.

'A circumstance of great consequence to my habits and comforts was my being released from the Court of Session. My salary, which was £1300, was reduced to £800. My friends, before leaving office, were desirous to patch up the deficiency with a pension. I did not see well how they could do this without being charged with obloquy, which they shall not be on my account. Besides, though £500 a year is a round sum, yet I would rather be independent than I would have it.

'I had also a kind communication about interfering to have me named a P. Councillor. But besides that, when one is old and poor, one should avoid taking rank, I would be much happier if I thought any act of kindness was done to help forward Charles; and having said so much, I made my bow, and declared my purpose of remaining satisfied with my knighthood. All this is rather pleasing. Yet much of it looks like winding up my bottom for the rest of my life. But there is a worse symptom of settling accompts, of which I have felt some signs. Ever since my fall in February, it is very certain that I have seemed to speak with an impediment. To add to this, I have the constant increase of my lameness—the thigh-joint, knee-joint, and ankle-joint. I move with great pain in the whole limb, and am at every minute, during an hour's walk, reminded of my mortality. I should not care for all this, if I were sure of dying handsomely; and Cadell's calculations might be sufficiently firm, though the author of Waverley had pulled on his last nightcap. Nay, they might be even more trustworthy, if remains and memoirs, and such like, were to give a zest to the posthumous. But the fear is, lest the blow be not sufficient to destroy life, and that I should linger on, "a driveller and a show."[1]

'*December* 24.—This morning died my old acquaintance and good friend, Miss Bell Fergusson, a woman of the most excellent conditions. The last two, or almost three years, were very sickly. A bitter cold day. Anne drove me over to Huntly-Burn. I found Colonel Fergusson, and Captain John, R.N., in deep affliction, expecting Sir Adam hourly. I wrote to Walter about the project of my Will.

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[1] Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*.

'*December* 29.—Attended poor Miss Bell Fergusson's funeral. I sat by the Reverend Mr. Thomson. Though ten years younger than him, I found the barrier between him and me much broken down. The difference of ten years is little after sixty has passed. In a cold day I saw poor Bell laid in her cold bed. Life never parted with a less effort.

'*January* 1, 1831.—I cannot say the world opens pleasantly for me this new year. There are many things for which I have reason to be thankful; especially that Cadell's plans seem to have succeeded—and he augurs that the next two years will well-nigh clear me. But I feel myself decidedly wrecked in point of health, and am now confirmed I have had a paralytic touch. I speak and read with embarrassment, and even my handwriting seems to stammer. This general failure

> With mortal crisis doth portend,
> My days to appropinque an end.[1]

I am not solicitous about this, only if I were worthy I would pray God for a sudden death, and no interregnum between I cease to exercise reason and I cease to exist.

'*January* 5.—Very indifferent, with more awkward feelings than I can well bear up against. My voice sunk and my head strangely confused. When I begin to form my ideas for conversation expressions fail me, yet in solitude they are sufficiently arranged. I incline to hold that these ugly symptoms are the work of imagination; but, as Dr. Adam Fergusson—a firm man, if ever there was one in the world—said on such an occasion, *what is worse than imagination?* As Anne was vexed and frightened, I allowed her to send for young Clarkson. Of course he could tell but little save what I knew before.

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[1] Hudibras.

'*January* 7.—A fine frosty day, and my spirits lighter. I have a letter of great comfort from Walter, who, in a manly, handsome, and dutiful manner, expresses his desire to possess the library and movables of every kind at Abbotsford, with such a valuation laid upon them as I shall choose to impose. This removes the only delay to making my Will.

'*January* 8.—Spent much time in writing instructions for my last will and testament. Have up two boys for shop-lifting—remained at Galashiels till four o'clock, and returned starved. Could work none, and was idle all evening — try to-morrow. — *Jan.* 9. Went over to Galashiels, and was busied the whole time till three o'clock about a petty thieving affair, and had before me a pair of gallows-birds, to whom I could say nothing for total want of proof, except, like the sapient Elbow, "thou shalt continue there, know thou, thou shalt continue." A little gallows-brood they were, and their fate will catch it. Sleepy, idle, and exhausted on this. Wrought little or none in the evening.—*Jan.* 10. Wrote a long letter to Henry Scott, who is a fine fellow, and what I call a Heart of Gold. He has sound parts, good sense, and is a true man. O that I could see a strong party banded together for the King and country, and if I see I can do anything, or have a chance of it, I will not fear for the skin-cutting. It is the selfishness of this generation that drives me mad.

A hundred pounds?
Ha! thou hast touch'd me nearly.'

The letter here alluded to contains some striking sentences:—

'*To Henry Francis Scott, Esq., Younger of Harden, M.P.*

'ABBOTSFORD, 10*th January* 1831.

'MY DEAR HENRY— . . . Unassisted by any intercourse with the existing world, but thinking over the present state of matters with all the attention in my power, I see but one line which can be taken by public men, that is really open, manly, and consistent. In the medical people's phrase, *Principiis obsta:* Oppose anything that can in principle innovate on the Constitution, which has placed Great Britain at the head of the world, and will keep her there, unless she chooses to descend of her own accord from that eminence. There may, for aught I know, be with many people reasons for deranging it; but I take it on the broad basis that nothing will be ultimately gained by any one who is not prepared to go full republican lengths. To place elections on a more popular foot, would produce advantage in no view whatever. Increasing the numbers of the electors would not distinguish them with more judgment for selecting a candidate, nor render them less venal, though it might make their price cheaper. But it would expose them to a worse species of corruption than that of money—the same that has been and is practised more or less in all republics—I mean that the intellects of the people will be liable to be besotted by oratory *ad captandum*, more dangerous than the worst intoxicating liquors. As for the chance of a beneficial alteration in the representatives, we need only point to Preston, and other suchlike places, for examples of the sense, modesty, and merit which would be added to our legislation by a democratic extension of the franchise. To answer these doubts, I find one general reply among those not actually calling themselves Whigs —who are now too deeply pledged to acknowledge their own rashness. All others reply by a reference to the *spirit of the people*—intimating a passive, though apparently unwilling resignation to the will of the *multitude*. When you bring them to the point, they grant all the dangers you state, and then comes their melancholy *What can we do?* The fact is, these timid men see they are likely to be called on for a pecuniary sacrifice, in the way of income-tax or otherwise—perhaps for military service in some constitutional fashion—certainly to exert themselves in various ways; and rather than do so, they will let the public take a risk. An able young man, not too much afraid of his own voice, nor over-modest, but who remembers that any one who can speak intelligibly is always taken current at the price at which he estimates himself, might at this crisis do much by tearing off the liniments with which they are daubing the wounds of the country, and crying peace, peace, when we are steering full sail towards civil war.

'I am old enough to remember well a similar crisis. About 1792, when I was entering life, the admiration of the godlike system of the French Revolution was so rife, that only a few old-fashioned Jacobites and the like ventured to hint a preference for the land they lived in; or pretended to doubt that the new principles must be infused into our worn-out constitution. Burke appeared, and all the gibberish about the superior legislation of the French dissolved like an enchanted castle when the destined knight blows his horn before it. The talents—the almost prophetic powers of Burke are not needed on this occasion, for men can *now* argue from the past. We can point to the old British ensign floating from the British citadel; while the tricolor has been to gather up from the mire and blood—the shambles of a thousand defeats—a prosperous standard to rally under. Still, however, this is a moment of dulness and universal apathy, and I fear that, unless an Orlando should blow the horn, it might fail to awaken the sleepers. But though we cannot do all, we should at least do each of us whatever we can.

'I would fain have a society formed for extending mutual understanding. Place yourselves at the head, and call yourselves Sons of St. Andrew—anything or nothing—but let there be a mutual understanding. Unite and combine. You will be surprised to see how soon you will become fashionable. It was by something of this kind that the stand was made in 1791-2; *vis unita fortior.* I earnestly recommend to Charles Baillie, Johnston of Alva, and yourself, to lose no opportunity to gather together the opinions of your friends — especially of your companions; for it is only among the young, I am sorry to say, that energy and real patriotism are now to be found. If it should be thought fit to admit peers, which will depend on the plans and objects adopted, our Chief ought naturally to be at the head. As for myself, no personal interests shall prevent my doing my best in the cause which I have always conceived to be that of my country. But I suspect there is little of me left to make my services worth the having. Why should not old Scotland have a party among her own children?—Yours very sincerely, my dear Henry, WALTER SCOTT.'

DIARY—'*January* 11.—Wrote and sent off about three of my own pages in the morning, then walked with Swanston. I tried to write before dinner, but, with drowsiness and pain in my head, made little way. A man carries no scales about him to ascertain his own value. I always remember the prayer of Virgil's sailor in extremity.

Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, nec vincere certo,
Quanquam O!—Sed superent quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti!
Extremos pudeat rediisse: hoc vincite, cives,
Et prohibete nefas![1]

We must to our oar; but I think this and another are all that even success would tempt me to write.

'*January* 17.—I had written two hours, when various visitors began to drop in. I was sick of these interruptions, and dismissed Mr. Laidlaw, having no hope of resuming my theme with spirit. God send me more leisure and fewer friends to peck it away by teaspoonfuls. —Another fool sends to entreat an autograph, which he should be ashamed in civility to ask, as I am to deny. I got notice of poor Henry Mackenzie's death. He has long maintained a niche in Scottish literature, gayest of the gay, though most sensitive of the sentimental.

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[1] Æneid V.

'*January* 18.—Dictated to Laidlaw till about one o'clock, during which time it was rainy. Afterwards I walked, sliding about in the mud, and very uncomfortable. In fact, there is no mistaking the three sufficients,[1] and Fate is now straitening its circumvallations around me.

Come what come may,
Time and the hour run through the roughest day.[2]

'*January* 19.—Mr. Laidlaw came down at ten, and we wrote till one. This is an important help to me, as it saves both my eyesight and nerves, which last are cruelly affected by finding those who look out of the windows grow gradually darker and darker. Rode out, or, more properly, was carried out into the woods to see the course of a new road, which may serve to carry off the thinnings of the trees, and for rides. It is very well lined, and will serve both for beauty and convenience. Mr. Laidlaw engages to come back to dinner, and finish two or three more pages. Met my agreeable and lady-like neighbour, Mrs. Brewster, on my pony, and I was actually ashamed to be seen by her.

Sir Dennis Brand! and on so poor a steed![3]

'I believe detestable folly of this kind is the very last that leaves us. One would have thought I ought to have little vanity at this time o' day; but it is an abiding appurtenance of the old Adam, and I write for penance what, like a fool, I actually felt. I think the peep, real or imaginary, at the gates of death should have given me firmness not to mind little afflictions.'

On the 31st of January, Miss Scott being too unwell for a journey, Sir Walter went alone to Edinburgh for the purpose of executing his last will. He (for the first time in his native town) took up his quarters at a hotel ; but the noise of the street disturbed him during the night (another evidence how much his nervous system had been shattered), and next day he was persuaded to remove to his bookseller's house in Atholl Crescent. In the apartment allotted to him there, he found several little pieces of furniture which some kind person had purchased for him at the sale in Castle Street, and which he presented to Mrs. Cadell. 'Here,' says his letter to Mrs. Lockhart, 'I saw various things that belonged to poor No. 39. I had many sad thoughts on seeing and handling them—but they are in kind keeping, and I was glad they had not gone to strangers.'

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[1] Sir W. alludes to Mrs. Piozzi's Tale of *The Three Warnings*.

[2] Macbeth, Act I. Scene 3.

[3] Crabbe's *Borough*, Letter xiii.

There came on, next day, a storm of such severity that he had to remain under this friendly roof until the 9th of February. His host perceived that he was unfit for any company but the quietest, and had sometimes one old friend, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Clerk, or Mr. Skene, to dinner—but no more. He seemed glad to see them—but they all observed him with pain. He never took the lead in conversation, and often remained altogether silent. In the mornings he wrote usually for several hours at Count Robert ; and Mr. Cadell remembers in particular, that on Ballantyne's reminding him that a motto was wanted for one of the chapters already finished, he looked out for a moment at the gloomy weather, and penned these lines—

The storm increases—'tis no sunny shower,
Foster'd in the moist breast of March or April,
Or such as parched Summer cools his lips with.
Heaven's windows are flung wide ; the inmost deeps
Call in hoarse greeting one upon another ;
On comes the flood in all its foaming horrors,
And where's the dike shall stop it.

The Deluge : a Poem.

On the 4th February, the will was signed, and attested by Nicolson, to whom Sir Walter explained the nature of the document, adding, 'I deposit it for safety in Mr.

Cadell's hands, and I still hope it may be long before he has occasion to produce it.' Poor Nicolson was much agitated, but stammered out a deep *amen.*

Another object of this journey was to consult, on the advice of Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson, a skilful mechanist, by name *Fortune*, about a contrivance for the support of the lame limb, which had of late given him much pain, as well as inconvenience. Mr. Fortune produced a clever piece of handiwork, and Sir Walter felt at first great relief from the use of it: insomuch that his spirits rose to quite the old pitch, and his letter to me upon the occasion overflows with merry applications of sundry maxims and verses about *Fortune.* '*Fortes Fortuna adjuvat*'—he says—'never more sing I

Fortune, my Foe, why dost thou frown on me?
And will my Fortune never better be?
Wilt thou, I say, for ever breed my pain?
And will thou ne'er return my joys again?[1]

'No—let my ditty be henceforth—

Fortune, my Friend, how well thou favourest me!
A kinder Fortune man did never see!
Thou propp'st my thigh, thou ridd'st my knee of pain,
I'll walk, I'll mount,—I'll be a man again.'

This expedient was undoubtedly of considerable service; but the use of it was not, after a short interval, so easy as at first: it often needed some little repair, too, and then in its absence he felt himself more helpless than before. Even then, however, the name was sure to tempt some ludicrous twisting of words. A little after this time he dictated a reviewal (never published) of a book called *Robson's British Herald*; and in mentioning it to me, he says—'I have given Laidlaw a long spell to-day at the saltires and fesses. No thanks to me, for my machine is away to be tightened in one bit, and loosened in another. I was telling Willie Laidlaw that I might adopt, with a slight difference, the motto of the noble Tullibardine:—"Furth Fortune and *file* the Fetters."'[1]

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[1] I believe this is the only verse of the old song (often alluded to by Shakspeare and his contemporaries) that has as yet been recovered.

Of this excursion to Edinburgh, the Diary says—'*Abbotsford, February* 9. The snow became impassable, and in Edinburgh I remained immovably fixed for ten days, never getting out of doors, save once or twice to dinner, when I went and returned in a sedan-chair. Cadell made a point of my coming to his excellent house, where I had no less excellent an apartment, and the most kind treatment; that is, no making a show of me, for which I was in but bad tune. Abercrombie and Ross had me bled with cupping-glasses, reduced me confoundedly, and restricted me of all creature comforts. But they did me good, as I am sure they sincerely meant to do; I got rid of a giddy feeling, which I had been plagued with, and have certainly returned much better. I did not neglect my testamentary affairs. I executed my last will, leaving Walter burdened with £1000 to Sophia, £2000 to Anne, and the same to Charles. He is to advance them this money if they want it; if not, to pay them interest. All this is his own choice, otherwise I would have sold the books and rattletraps. I have made provisions for clearing my estate by my publications, should it be possible; and should that prove possible, from the time of such clearance being effected, to be a fund available to all my children who shall be alive or leave representatives. My bequests must many of them seem hypothetical.

'During this unexpected stay in town I dined with the Lord Chief-Commissioner, with the Skenes twice, with Lord Medwyn, and was as happy as anxiety about my daughter would permit me. The appearance of the streets was most desolate; the hackney-coaches strolling about like ghosts with four horses; the foot passengers few, except the lowest of the people. I wrote a good deal of Count Robert, yet, I cannot tell why, my pen stammers egregiously, and I write horridly incorrect. I longed to have friend Laidlaw's assistance.

[1] '*Fill* the fetters,' in the original. No bad motto for the Duke of Athole's ancestors—great predatory chiefs of the Highland frontier.

'A heavy and most effective thaw coming on, I got home about five at night, and found the haugh covered with water; dogs, pigs, cows, to say nothing of human beings, all that slept at the offices in danger of being drowned. They came up to the mansion-house about midnight, with such an infernal clamour, that Anne thought we were attacked by Captain Swing and all the Radicals.'

After this the Diary offers but a few unimportant entries during several weeks. He continued working at the Novel, and when discouraged about it, gave a day to his article on Heraldry: but he never omitted to spend many hours, either in writing or in dictating something; and Laidlaw, when he came down a few minutes beyond the appointed time, was sure to be rebuked. At the beginning of March, he was anew roused about political affairs; and bestowed four days on drawing up an address against the Reform Bill, which he designed to be adopted by the Freeholders of the Forest. They, however, preferred a shorter one from the pen of a plain practical country gentleman (the late Mr. Elliot Lockhart of Borthwickbrae), who had often represented them in Parliament: and Sir Walter, it is probable, felt this disappointment more acutely than he has chosen to indicate in his Journal.

'*February* 10.—I set to work with Mr. Laidlaw, and had after that a capital ride. My pony, little used, was somewhat frisky, but I rode on to Huntly-Burn. Began my diet on my new régime, and like it well, especially porridge to supper. It is wonderful how old tastes rise. —*Feb.* 23, 24, 25. These three days I can hardly be said to have varied from my ordinary. Rose at seven, dressed before eight—wrote letters, or did any little business till a quarter past nine. Then breakfasted. Mr. Laidlaw comes from ten till one. Then take the pony, and ride—*quantum mutatus*—two or three miles, John Swanston walking by my bridle-rein lest I fall off. Come home about three or four. Then to dinner on a single plain dish and half a tumbler, or, by'r Lady, three-fourths of a tumbler of whisky and water. Then sit till six o'clock, when enter Mr. Laidlaw again, who works commonly till eight. After this, work usually alone till half-past ten; sup on porridge and milk, and so to bed. The work is half done. If any one asks what time I take to think on the composition, I might say, in one point of view, it was seldom five minutes out of my head the whole day—in another light, it was never the serious subject of consideration at all, for it never occupied my thoughts for five minutes together, except when I was dictating.—*Feb.* 27. Being Saturday, no Mr. Laidlaw came yesterday evening—nor to-day, being Sunday.—*Feb.* 28. Past ten, and Mr. Laidlaw, the model of clerks in other respects, is not come yet. He has never known the value of time, so is not quite accurate in punctuality; but that, I hope, will come, if I can drill him into it without hurting him. I think I hear him coming. I am like the poor wizard, who is first puzzled how to raise the devil, and then how to employ him. Worked till one, then walked with great difficulty and pain.—*March* 5. I have a letter from our member Whytbank, adjuring me to assist the gentlemen of the county with an address against the Reform Bill, which menaces them with being blended with Peeblesshire, and losing, of consequence, one-half of their functions. Sandy Pringle conjures me not to be very nice in choosing my epithets. Torwoodlee comes over and speaks to the same purpose, adding, it will be the greatest service I can do the country, etc. This, in a manner, drives me out of a resolution to keep myself clear of politics, and let them "fight dog, fight bear." But I am too easy to be persuaded to bear a hand. The young Duke of Buccleuch comes to visit me also; so I promised to shake my duds, and give them a cast of my calling—fall back, fall edge.

'*March* 7, 8, 9, 10.—In these four days I drew up, with much anxiety, an address in reprobation of the Bill, both with respect to Selkirkshire, and in its general purport. Mr. Laidlaw, though he is on t'other side on the subject, thinks it the best thing I ever wrote; and I myself am happy to find that it cannot be said to smell of the apoplexy. But it was too declamatory, too much like a pamphlet, and went far too generally into opposition, to please the county gentlemen, who are timidly inclined to dwell on their own grievances, rather than the public wrongs. Must try to get something for Mr. Laidlaw, for I am afraid I am twaddling. I do not think my head is weakened—yet a strange vacillation makes me suspect. It is not thus that men begin to fail,—becoming, as it were, infirm of purpose?—

> That way madness lies—let me shun that.
> No more of that.

Yet why be a child about it? What must be, will be.

'*March* 11.—This day we had our meeting at Selkirk. I found Borthwickbrae (late Member) had sent the frame of an address, which was tabled by Mr. Andrew Lang. It was the reverse of mine in every respect. It was short, and to the point. It only contained a remonstrance against the incorporation with Selkirkshire, and left it to be inferred that they opposed the Bill in other respects. As I saw that it met the ideas of the meeting (six in number) better by far than mine, I instantly put that in my pocket. But I endeavoured to add to their complaint of a private wrong, a general clause stating their sense of the hazard of passing at once a Bill full of such violent innovations. But though Harden, Alva, and Torwoodlee voted for this measure, it was refused by the rest of the meeting, to my disappointment. I was a fool to "stir such a dish of skimmed milk with so honourable an action."[1] If some of the gentlemen of the press, whose livelihood is lying, were to get hold of this story, what would they make of it? It gives me a right to decline future interference, and let the world wag—"Transeat cum cæteris erroribus."—I only give way to one jest. A rat-catcher was desirous to come and complete his labours in my house, and I, who thought he only talked and laughed with the servants, recommended him to go to the head-courts and meetings of freeholders, where he would find rats in plenty.

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[1] Hotspur, in King Henry IV. Act II. Scene 3.

'I will make my opinion public at every place where I shall be called upon or expected to appear; but I will not thrust myself forward again. May the Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this vow!'

He kept it in all its parts. Though urged to take up his pen against the ministerial Reform Bill, by several persons of high consequence, who, of course, little knew his real condition of health, he resolutely refused to make any such experiment again. But he was equally resolved to be absent from no meeting at which, as Sheriff or Deputy-Lieutenant, he might naturally be expected to appear in his place, and record his aversion to the Bill. The first of these meetings was one of the freeholders of Roxburgh, held at Jedburgh on the 21st of March, and there, to the distress and alarm of his daughter, he insisted on being present, and proposing one of the Tory resolutions,—which he did in a speech of some length, but delivered in a tone so low, and with such hesitation in utterance, that only a few detached passages were intelligible to the bulk of the audience.

'We are told' (said he) 'on high authority, that France is the model for us,—that we and all the other nations ought to put ourselves to school there,—and endeavour to take out our degrees at *the University of Paris*.[1]—The French are a very ingenious people; they have often tried to borrow from us, and now we should repay the obligation by borrowing a leaf from them. But I fear there is an incompatibility between the tastes and habits of France and Britain, and that we may succeed as ill in copying them, as they have hitherto done in copying us. We in this district are proud, and with reason, that the first chain-bridge was the work of a Scotchman. It still hangs where he erected it, a pretty long time ago. The French heard of our invention, and determined to introduce it, but with great improvements and embellishments. A friend of my own saw the thing tried. It was on the Seine, at Marly. The French chain-bridge looked lighter and airier than the prototype. Every Englishman present was disposed to confess that we had been beaten at our own trade. But by and by the gates were opened, and the multitude were to pass over. It began to swing rather formidably beneath the pressure of the good company; and by the time the architect, who led the procession in great pomp and glory, reached the middle, the whole gave way, and he—worthy, patriotic artist—was the first that got a ducking. They had forgot the great middle bolt, —or rather, this ingenious person had conceived that to be a clumsy-looking feature, which might safely be dispensed with, while he put some invisible gimcrack of his own to supply its place.'——Here Sir Walter was interrupted by violent hissing and hooting from the populace of the town, who had flocked in and occupied the greater part of the Court-House. He stood calmly till the storm subsided, and resumed; but the friend, whose notes are before me, could not catch what he said, until his voice rose with another illustration of the old style. 'My friends,' he said, 'I am old and failing, and you think me full of very silly prejudices; but I have seen a good deal of public men, and thought a good deal of public affairs in my day, and I can't help suspecting that the manufacturers of this new constitution are like a parcel of schoolboys taking to pieces a watch which used to go tolerably well for all practical purposes, in the conceit that they can put it together again far better than the old watchmaker. I fear they will fail when they come to the reconstruction, and I should not, I confess, be much surprised if it were to turn out that their first step had been to break the main-spring.'—Here he was again stopped by a confused Babel of contemptuous sounds, which seemed likely to render further attempts ineffectual. He, abruptly and unheard, proposed his Resolution, and then, turning to the riotous artisans, exclaimed—'I regard your gabble no more than the geese on the green.' His countenance glowed with indignation, as he resumed his seat on the bench. But when, a few moments afterwards, the business being over, he rose to withdraw, every trace of passion was gone. He turned round at the door, and bowed to the assembly. Two or three, not more, renewed their hissing; he bowed again, and took leave in the words of the doomed gladiator, which I hope none who had joined in these insults understood—'MORITURUS VOS SALUTO.'

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[1] See Edinburgh Review for October 1830, p. 23.

Of this meeting there is but a very slight notice in one of the next extracts from his Diary: another of them refers to that remarkable circumstance in English history, the passing of the first Reform Bill in the Commons, on the 22nd of March, by a majority of *one;* and a third to the last really good portrait that was painted of himself. This was the work of Mr. Francis Grant (brother of the Laird of Kilgraston), whose subsequent career has justified the Diarist's prognostications. This excellent picture, in which, from previous familiarity with the subject, he was able to avoid the painful features of recent change, was done for his and Sir Walter's friend, Lady Ruthven.

'*March* 20.—Little of this day, but that it was so uncommonly windy that I was almost blown off my pony, and was glad to grasp the mane to prevent its actually happening. I began the third volume of Count Robert of Paris, which has been on the anvil during all these vexatious circumstances of politics and health. But the blue heaven bends over all. It may be ended in a fortnight, if I keep my scheme. But I *will* take time enough. I thought I was done with politics; but it is easy getting into the mess, but difficult, and sometimes disgraceful, to get out. I have a letter from Sheriff Oliver, desiring me to go to Jedburgh on Monday, and show countenance by adhering to a set of propositions. Though not well drawn, they are uncompromising enough; so I will not part company.

'*March* 22.—Went yesterday at nine o'clock to the meeting; a great number present, with a mob of Reformers, who showed their sense of propriety by hissing, hooting, and making all sorts of noises. And these unwashed artificers are from henceforth to select our legislators. What can be expected from them except such a thick-headed plebeian as will be "a hare-brained Hotspur, guided by a whim"? There was some speaking, but not good. I said something, for I could not sit quiet. I did not get home till past nine, having fasted the whole time.

'*March* 25.—The measure carried by a single vote. In other circumstances one would hope for the interference of the House of Lords; but it is all hab nab at a venture, as Cervantes says. The worst is, that there is a popular party, who want personal power, and are highly unfitted to enjoy it. It has fallen easily, the old constitution; no bullying Mirabeau to assail, no eloquent Maury to defend. It has been thrown away like a child's broken toy. Well—the good sense of the people is much trusted to; we shall see what it will do for us. The curse of Cromwell on those whose conceit brought us to this pass! *Sed transeat.* It is vain to mourn what cannot be mended.

'*March* 26.—Frank Grant and his lady came here.[1] Frank will, I believe, if he attends to his profession, be one of the celebrated men of the age. He has long been well known to me as the companion of my sons and the partner of my daughters. In youth, that is in extreme youth, he was passionately fond of fox-hunting and other sports, but not of any species of gambling. He had also a strong passion for painting, and made a little collection. As he had sense enough to feel that a younger brother's fortune would not last long under the expenses of a good stud and a rare collection of *chefs d'œuvre*, he used to avow his intention to spend his patrimony, about £10,000, and then again to make his fortune by the law. The first he soon accomplished. But the law is not a profession so easily acquired, nor did Frank's talents lie in that direction. His passion for painting turned out better. Connoisseurs approved of his sketches, both in pencil and oil, but not without the sort of criticisms made on these occasions—that they were admirable for an amateur—but it could not be expected that he should submit to the actual drudgery absolutely necessary for a profession—and all that species of criticism which gives way before natural genius and energy of character. In the meantime Frank saw the necessity of doing something to keep himself independent, having, I think, too much spirit to become a *Jock the Laird's brither*, drinking out the last glass of the bottle, riding the horses which the laird wishes to sell, and drawing sketches to amuse the lady and the children. He was above all this, and honourably resolved to cultivate his taste for painting, and become a professional artist. I am no judge of painting, but I am conscious that Francis Grant possesses, with much cleverness, a sense of beauty derived from the best source, that is, the observation of really good society, while, in many modern artists, the want of that species of feeling is so great as to be revolting. His former acquaintances render his immediate entrance into business completely secure, and it will rest with himself to carry on his success. He has, I think, that degree of force of character which will make him keep and enlarge any reputation which he may acquire. He has confidence, too, in his own powers, always requisite for a young gentleman trying things of this sort, whose aristocratic pretensions must be envied.

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[1] Mr. Francis Grant had recently married Miss Norman, a niece of the Duke of Rutland's.

'*March* 29.—Frank Grant is still with me, and is well pleased, I think very advisedly so, with a cabinet picture of myself, armour and so forth, together with my two noble stag-hounds. The dogs sat charmingly, but the picture took up some time.'

I must insert a couple of letters written about this time. That to the Secretary of the Literary Fund, one of the most useful and best managed charities in London, requires no explanation. The other was addressed to the

Rev. Alexander Dyce, on receiving a copy of that gentleman's edition of Greene's Plays, with a handsome dedication. Sir Walter, it appears, designed to make Peele, Greene, and Webster the subject of an article in the Quarterly Review. It is proper to observe that he had never met their editor, though two or three letters had formerly passed between them. The little volume which he sent in return to Mr. Dyce was 'the Trial of Duncan Terig and Alexander Macdonald,'—one of the Bannatyne Club books.

'*To B. Nichols, Esq., Registrar of the Literary Fund,*
London.

'ABBOTSFORD, 29*th March* 1831.

'SIR—I am honoured with your obliging letter of the 25th current, flattering me with the information that you had placed my name on the list of stewards for the Literary Fund, at which I am sorry to say it will not be in my power to attend, as I do not come to London this season. You, sir, and the other gentlemen who are making such efforts in behalf of literature, have a right to know why a person, who has been much favoured by the public, should decline joining an institution whose object it is to relieve those who have been less fortunate than himself, or, in plain words, to contribute to the support of the poor of my own guild. If I could justly accuse myself of this species of selfishness, I should think I did a very wrong thing. But the wants of those whose distresses and merits are known to me, are of such a nature, that what I have the means of sparing for the relief of others, is not nearly equal to what I wish. Anything which I might contribute to your Fund would, of course, go to the relief of other objects, and the encouragement of excellent persons, doubtless, to whom I am a stranger; and from having some acquaintance with the species of distress to be removed, I believe I shall aid our general purpose best, by doing such service as I can to misery which cannot be so likely to attract your eyes.

'I cannot express myself sufficiently upon the proposal which supposes me willing to do good, and holds out an opportunity to that effect.—I am, with great respect to the trustees and other gentlemen of the Fund, sir, your obliged humble servant, WALTER SCOTT.'

'*To the Rev. Alexander Dyce, London.*

'ABBOTSFORD, *March* 31, 1831.

'DEAR SIR—I had the pleasure of receiving Greene's Plays, with which, as works of great curiosity, I am highly gratified. If the editor of the Quarterly consents, as he probably will, I shall do my endeavour to be useful, though I am not sure when I can get admission. I shall be inclined to include Webster, who, I think, is one of the best of our ancient dramatists; if you will have the kindness to tell the bookseller to send it to Whittaker, under cover to me, care of Mr. Cadell, Edinburgh, it will come safe, and be thankfully received. Marlowe and others I have,—and some acquaintance with the subject, though not much.

'I have not been well; threatened with a determination of blood to the head; but by dint of bleeding and regimen, I have recovered. I have lost, however, like Hamlet, all habit of my exercise, and, once able to walk thirty miles a day, or ride a hundred, I can hardly walk a mile, or ride a pony four or five.

'I will send you, by Whittaker, a little curious tract of murder, in which a ghost is the principal evidence. The spirit did not carry his point, however; for the apparition, though it should seem the men were guilty, threw so much ridicule on the whole story, that they were acquitted.[1]

'I wish you had given us more of Greene's prose works.—I am, with regard, dear sir, yours sincerely,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

To resume the Diary—'*March* 30. Bob Dundas[2] and

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[1] See Scott's Letters on Demonology, p. 371.

[2] Mr. Dundas of Arniston.

and his wife (Miss Durham that was) came to spend a day or two. I was heartily glad to see him, being my earliest and best friend's son. John Swinton, too, came on the part of an Anti-Reform meeting in Edinburgh, who exhorted me to take up the pen; but I declined, and pleaded health, which God knows I have a right to urge. I might have urged also the chance of my breaking down, but that would be a cry of *wolf*, which might very well prove real.—*April* 2. Mr. Henry Liddell, eldest son of Lord Ravensworth, arrives here. I like him and his brother Tom very much, although they are what may be called fine men. Henry is accomplished, is an artist and musician, and certainly has a fine taste for poetry, though he may never cultivate it.—*April* 8. This day I took leave of poor Major John Scott,[1] who, being afflicted with a distressing asthma, has resolved upon selling his house of Ravenswood, which he had dressed up with much neatness, and going abroad. Without having been intimate friends, we were always affectionate relations, and now we part probably never to meet in this world. He has a good deal of the character said to belong to the family. Our parting with mutual feeling may be easily supposed.'

The next entry relates to the last public appearance that the writer ever made, under circumstances at all pleasant, in his native country. He had taken great interest about a new line of mail-road between Selkirk and Edinburgh, which runs in view of Abbotsford across the Tweed; but he never saw it completed.

'*April* 11.—This day I went with Anne, and Miss Jane Erskine,[2] to see the laying of the stones of foundation for two bridges in my neighbourhood over Tweed and the Ettrick. There were a great many people assembled. The day was beautiful, the scene was romantic, and the people in good spirits and good-humour. Mr. Paterson of Galashiels[1] made a most excellent prayer: Mr. Smith[2] gave a proper repast to the workmen, and we subscribed sovereigns apiece to provide for any casualty. I laid the foundation-stone of the bridge over Tweed, and Mr. C. B. Scott of Woll[3] the foundation-stone of that of Ettrick. The general spirit of good-humour made the scene, though without parade, extremely interesting.

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[1] This gentleman, a brother to the Laird of Raeburn, had made some fortune in the East Indies, and bestowed the name of *Ravenswood* on a villa which he built near Melrose. He died in 1831.

[2] A daughter of Lord Kinnedder's. She died in 1838.

'*April* 12.—We breakfasted with the Fergussons; after which Anne and Miss Erskine walked up the Rhymer's Glen. I could as easily have made a pilgrimage to Rome with peas in my shoes unboiled. I drove home, and began to work about ten o'clock. At one o'clock I rode, and sent off what I had finished. Mr. Laidlaw dined with me. In the afternoon we wrote five or six pages more. I am, I fear, sinking a little from having too much space to fill, and a want of the usual inspiration—which makes me, like the chariot-wheels of Pharaoh in the sands of the Red Sea, drive heavily. It is the less matter if this prove, as I suspect, the last of this fruitful family.—*April* 13. Corrected proofs in the morning. At ten o'clock began where I had left off at my romance. Laidlaw begins to smite the rock for not giving forth the water in quantity sufficient. I have against me the disadvantage of being called the Just, and every one of course is willing to worry me. But they have been long at it, and even those works which have been worst received at their first appearance, now keep their ground fairly enough. So we'll try our old luck another voyage.—It is a close thick rain, and I cannot ride, and I am too dead lame to walk in the house. So feeling really exhausted, I will try to sleep a little.—My nap was a very short one, and was agreeably replaced by Basil Hall's Fragments of Voyages. Everything about the inside of a vessel is interesting, and my friend B. H.

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[1] The Rev. N. Paterson, now one of the Ministers of Glasgow.

[2] Mr. John Smith of Darnick, the builder of Abbotsford, and architect of these bridges.

[3] This gentleman died in Edinburgh on 4th February 1838.

has the good sense to know this is the case. I remember when my eldest brother took the humour of going to sea, James Watson used to be invited to George's Square to tell him such tales of hardships as might disgust him with the service. Such were my poor mother's instructions. But Captain Watson[1] could not by all this render a sea life disgusting to the young midshipman, or to his brother, who looked on and listened. Hall's accounts of the assistance given to the Spaniards at Cape Finisterre, and the absurd behaviour of the Junta, are highly interesting. A more inefficient, yet a more resolved class of men than the Spaniards, were never conceived.—*April* 16. Lord Meadowbank and his son. Skene walks with me. Weather enchanting. About one hundred leaves will now complete Robert of Paris. Query, If the last? Answer—Not knowing, can't say. I think it will.'——

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[1] The late Captain James Watson, R.N., was distantly related to Sir Walter's mother. His son, Mr. John Watson Gordon, has risen to great eminence as a painter; and his portraits of Scott and Hogg rank among his best pieces. That of the Ettrick Shepherd is indeed perfect; and Sir Walter's has only the disadvantage of having been done a little too late. These masterly pictures are both in Mr. Cadell's possession.

CHAPTER LXXX

Apoplectic Paralysis—Miss Ferrier—Dr. Mackintosh Mackay—Scenes at Jedburgh and Selkirk—Castle Dangerous—Excursion to Douglasdale—Church of St. Bride's, etc.—Turner's Designs for the Poetry—Last Visits to Smailholm, Bemerside, Ettrick, etc.—Visit of Captain Burns—Mr. Adolphus—and Mr. Wordsworth—'Yarrow revisited,' and Sonnet on the Eildons.

April—Oct. 1831

THE next entry in the Diary is as follows :—

'From Saturday 16th April, to Sunday 24th of the same month, unpleasantly occupied by ill health and its consequences. A distinct stroke of paralysis affecting both my nerves and speech, though beginning only on Monday with a very bad cold. Doctor Abercrombie was brought out by the friendly care of Cadell, but young Clarkson had already done the needful, that is, had bled and blistered, and placed me on a very reduced diet. Whether precautions have been taken in time, I cannot tell. I think they have, though severe in themselves, beat the disease ; but I am alike prepared.'

The preceding paragraph has been deciphered with difficulty. The blow which it records was greatly more severe than any that had gone before it. Sir Walter's friend Lord Meadowbank had come to Abbotsford, as usual when on the Jedburgh circuit ; and he would make an effort to receive the Judge in something of the old style of the place ; he collected several of the neighbouring gentry to dinner, and tried to bear his wonted part in the conversation. Feeling his strength and spirits flagging, he was tempted to violate his physician's directions, and took two or three glasses of champaign, not having tasted wine for several months before. On retiring to his dressing-room he had this severe shock of apoplectic paralysis, and kept his bed under the surgeon's hands, for several days.

Shortly afterwards, his eldest son and his daughter Sophia arrived at Abbotsford. It may be supposed that they both would have been near him instantly, had that been possible; but, not to mention the dread of seeming to be alarmed about him, Major Scott's regiment was stationed in a very disturbed district, and his sister was still in a disabled state from the relics of a rheumatic fever. I followed her a week later, when we established ourselves at Chiefswood for the rest of the season. Charles Scott had some months before this time gone to Naples, as an attaché to the British Embassy there. During the next six months the Major was at Abbotsford every now and then—as often as circumstances could permit him to be absent from his Hussars.

Diary—'*April* 27, 1831.—They have cut me off from animal food and fermented liquors of every kind; and, thank God, I can fast with any one. I walked out and found the day delightful; the woods too looking charming, just bursting forth to the tune of the birds. I have been whistling on my wits like so many chickens, and cannot miss any of them. I feel on the whole better than I have yet done. I believe I have fined and recovered, and so may be thankful.—*April* 28, 29. Walter made his appearance here, well and stout, and completely recovered from his stomach complaints by abstinence. He has youth on his side; and I in age must submit to be a Lazarus. The medical men persist in recommending a seton. I am no friend to these remedies, and will be sure of the necessity before I yield consent. The dying like an Indian under tortures is no joke; and as Commodore

Trunnion says, I feel heart-whole as a biscuit.—*April* 30, *May* 1. Go on with Count Robert half-a-dozen leaves per day. I am not much behind with my hand-work. The task of pumping my brains becomes inevitably harder when

> Both chain pumps are choked below;

and though this may not be the case literally, yet the apprehension is well-nigh as bad.—*May* 3. Sophia arrives—with all the children looking well and beautiful, except poor Johnnie, who looks pale. But it is no wonder, poor thing!—*May* 4. I have a letter from Lockhart, promising to be down by next Wednesday. I shall be glad to see and consult with Lockhart. My pronunciation is a good deal improved. My time glides away ill employed, but I am afraid of the palsy. I should not like to be pinned to my chair. I believe even that kind of life is more endurable than we could suppose—yet the idea is terrible to a man who has been active. Your wishes are limited to your little circle. My own circle in bodily matters is narrowing daily; not so in intellectual matters—but of that I am perhaps a worse judge. The plough is nearing the end of the furrow.

'*May* 5.—A fleece of letters, which must be answered I suppose,—all from persons my zealous admirers of course, and expecting a degree of generosity, which will put to rights all their maladies, physical and mental, and that I can make up whatever losses have been their lot, raise them to a desirable rank, and will stand their protector and patron. I must, they take it for granted, be astonished at having an address from a stranger; on the contrary, I would be astonished if any of these extravagant epistles came from any one who had the least title to enter into correspondence.—My son Walter takes leave of me to-day, to return to Sheffield. At his entreaty I have agreed to put in a seton, which they seem all to recommend. My own opinion is, this addition to my tortures will do me no good—but I cannot hold out against my son.

'*May* 6, 7, 8.—Here is a precious job. I have a formal remonstrance from these critical people, Ballantyne and Cadell, against the last volume of Count Robert, which is within a sheet of being finished. I suspect their opinion will be found to coincide with that of the public; at least it is not very different from my own. The blow is a stunning one, I suppose, for I scarcely feel it. It is singular, but it comes with as little surprise as if I had a remedy ready; yet, God knows, I am at sea in the dark, and the vessel leaky, I think, into the bargain. I cannot conceive that I should have tied a knot with my tongue which my teeth cannot untie. We shall see.—I have suffered terribly, that is the truth, rather in body than in mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can. It would argue too great an attachment of consequence to my literary labours to sink under critical clamour. Did I know how to begin, I would begin again this very day, although I knew I should sink at the end. After all, this is but fear and faintness of heart, though of another kind from that which trembleth at a loaded pistol. My bodily strength is terribly gone; perhaps my mental too.'

On my arrival (May 10th), I found Sir Walter to have rallied considerably; yet his appearance, as I first saw him, was the most painful sight I had ever then seen. Knowing at what time I might be expected, he had been lifted on his pony, and advanced about half a mile on the Selkirk road to meet me. He moved at a foot-pace, with Laidlaw at one stirrup, and his forester Swanston (a fine fellow, who did all he could to replace Tom Purdie) at the other. Abreast was old Peter Mathieson on horseback, with one of my children astride before him on a pillion. Sir Walter had had his head shaved, and wore a black silk night-cap under his blue bonnet. All his garments hung loose about him; his countenance was thin and haggard, and there was an obvious distortion in the muscles of one cheek. His look, however, was placid—his eye as bright as ever—

perhaps brighter than it ever was in health; he smiled with the same affectionate gentleness, and though at first it was not easy to understand everything he said, he spoke cheerfully and manfully.

He had resumed, and was trying to recast, his novel. All the medical men had urged him, by every argument, to abstain from any such attempts; but he smiled on them in silence, or answered with some jocular rhyme. One note has this postscript—a parody on a sweet lyric of Burns's—

Dour, dour, and eident was he,
  Dour and eident but-and-ben,
Dour against their barley-water,
  And eident on the Bramah pen.

He told me, that in the winter he had more than once tried writing with his own hand, because he had no longer the same 'pith and birr' that formerly rendered dictation easy to him; but that the experiment failed. He was now sensible he could do nothing without Laidlaw to hold 'the Bramah pen'; adding, 'Willie is a kind clerk—I see by his looks when I am pleasing him, and that pleases me.' And, however the cool critic may now estimate *Count Robert*, no one who then saw the author could wonder that Laidlaw's prevalent feeling in writing those pages should have been admiration. Under the full consciousness that he had sustained three or four strokes of apoplexy or palsy, or both combined, and tortured by various attendant ailments, cramp, rheumatism in half his joints, daily increasing lameness, and now of late gravel (which was, though last, not least), he retained all the energy of his will, struggled manfully against this sea of troubles, and might well have said seriously, as he more than once both said and wrote playfully,

'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.[1]

To assist them in amusing him in the hours which he spent out of his study, and especially that he might be tempted to make those hours more frequent, his daughters had invited his friend the authoress of *Marriage* to come out to Abbotsford; and her coming was serviceable. For she knew and loved him well, and she had seen enough of affliction akin to his, to be well skilled in dealing with it. She could not be an hour in his company without observing what filled his children with more sorrow than all the rest of the case. He would begin a story as gaily as ever, and go on, in spite of the hesitation in his speech, to tell it with highly picturesque effect—but before he reached the point, it would seem as if some internal spring had given way—he paused, and gazed round him with the blank anxiety of look that a blind man has when he has dropped his staff. Unthinking friends sometimes pained him sadly by giving him the catch-word abruptly. I noticed the delicacy of Miss Ferrier on such occasions. Her sight was bad, and she took care not to use her glasses when he was speaking; and she affected to be also troubled with deafness, and would say—'Well, I am getting as dull as a post; I have not heard a word since you said so and so'—being sure to mention a circumstance behind that at which he had really halted. He then took up the thread with his habitual smile of courtesy—as if forgetting his case entirely in the consideration of the lady's infirmity.

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[1] Addison's *Cato*.

He had also a visit from the learned and pious Dr. M. Mackay, then minister of Laggan, but now of Dunoon—the chief author of the Gaelic Dictionary, then recently published under the auspices of the Highland Society; and this gentleman also accommodated himself, with the tact of genuine kindness, to the circumstances of the time.

In the family circle Sir Walter seldom spoke of his illness at all, and when he did, it was always in the hopeful strain. In private to Laidlaw and myself, his language corresponded exactly with the tone of the Diary—he expressed his belief that the chances of recovery were few—very few—but always added, that he considered it his duty to exert what faculties remained to him, for the sake of his creditors, to the very last. 'I am very anxious,' he repeatedly said to me, 'to be done, one way or other, with this Count Robert, and a little story about the Castle Dangerous, which also I had long had in my head—but after that I will attempt nothing more—at least not until I have finished all the notes for the Novels, etc.; for, in case of my going off at the next slap, you would naturally have to take up that job, and where could you get at all my old wives' stories?'

I felt the sincerest pity for Cadell and Ballantyne at this time; and advised him to lay Count Robert aside for a few weeks, at all events, until the general election now going on should be over. He consented—but immediately began another series of Tales on French History—which he never completed. The Diary says:—

'*May* 12.—Resolved to lay by Robert of Paris, and take it up when I can work. Thinking on it really makes my head swim, and that is not safe.—Miss Ferrier comes out to us. This gifted personage, besides having great talents, has conversation the least *exigeante* of any author, female at least, whom I have ever seen among the long list I have encountered with: simple, full of humour, and exceedingly ready at repartee; and all this without the least affectation of the blue stocking.

'*May* 13.—Mr., or more properly, Dr. MacIntosh Mackay comes out to see me—a simple learned man, and a Highlander who weighs his own nation justly—a modest and estimable person. Reports of mobs at all the elections, which I fear will prove true. They have much to answer for, who, in gaiety of heart, have brought a peaceful and virtuous population to such a pass.

'*May* 14.—Rode with Lockhart and Mr. Mackay through the plantations, and spent a pleasanter day than of late months. Story of a haunted glen in Laggan. A chieftain's daughter or cousin loved a man of low degree.

Her kindred discovered the intrigue, and punished the lover's presumption by binding the unhappy man, and laying him naked in one of the large ants' nests common in a Highland forest. He expired in agony of course, and his mistress became distracted, roamed wildly in the glen till she died, and her phantom, finding no repose, haunted it after her death to such a degree, that the people shunned the road by day as well as night. Mrs. Grant tells the story with the addition, that her husband, then minister of Laggan, formed a religious meeting in the place, and by the exercise of public worship there, overcame the popular terror of the Red Woman. Dr. Mackay seems to think that she was rather banished by a branch of the Parliamentary road running up the glen, than by the prayers of his predecessor. Dr. Mackay, it being Sunday, favoured us with an excellent discourse on the Socinian controversy, which I wish my friend Mr. * * * * had heard.—*May* 15. Dr. M. left us early this morning; and I rode and studied as usual, working at the Tales of my Grandfather. Our good and learned Doctor wishes to go down the Tweed to Berwick. It is a laudable curiosity, and I hope will be agreeably satisfied.'

On the 18th, I witnessed a scene which must dwell painfully upon many memories besides mine. The rumours of brick-bat and bludgeon work at the hustings of this month were so prevalent, that Sir Walter's family, and not less zealously the Tory candidate for Roxburghshire himself, tried every means to dissuade him from attending the election for that county. We thought overnight that we had succeeded, and, indeed, as the result of the vote was not at all doubtful, there was not the shadow of a reason for his appearing on this occasion. About seven in the morning, however, when I came down stairs intending to ride over to Jedburgh, I found he had countermanded my horse, ordered the carriage to the door, and was already impatient to be off for the scene of action. We found the town in a most tempestuous state: in fact, it was almost wholly in the hands of a disciplined rabble, chiefly weavers from Hawick, who marched up and down with drums and banners, and then, after filling the Court-hall, lined the streets, grossly insulting every one who did not wear the reforming colours. Sir Walter's carriage, as it advanced towards the house of the Shortreed family, was pelted with stones; one or two fell into it, but none touched him. He breakfasted with the widow and children of his old friend, and then walked to the Hall between me and one of the young Shortreeds. He was saluted with groans and blasphemies all the way—and I blush to add that a woman spat upon him from a window; but this last contumely I think he did not observe. The scene within was much what has been described under the date of March 21st, except that though he attempted to speak from the Bench, not a word was audible, such was the frenzy. Young Harden was returned by a great majority, 40 to 19, and we then with difficulty gained the inn where the carriage had been put up. But the aspect of the street was by that time such, that several of the gentlemen on the Whig side came and entreated us not to attempt starting from the front of our inn. One of them, Captain Russell Eliott of the Royal Navy, lived in the town, or rather in a villa adjoining it, to the rear of the Spread Eagle. Sir Walter was at last persuaded to accept this courteous adversary's invitation, and accompanied him through some winding lanes to his residence. Peter Mathieson by and by brought the carriage thither, in the same clandestine method, and we escaped from Jedburgh with one shower more of stones at the Bridge. I believe there would have been a determined onset at that spot, but for the zeal of three or four sturdy Darnickers (Joseph Shillinglaw, carpenter, being their Coryphæus), who, had, unobserved by us, clustered themselves beside the footman in the rumble.

The Diary contains this brief notice:—'*May* 18. Went to Jedburgh greatly against the wishes of my daughters. The mob were exceedingly vociferous and brutal, as they usually are nowadays. The population gathered in formidable numbers — a thousand from Hawick also—sad blackguards. The day passed with much clamour and no mischief. Henry Scott was re-elected—for the last time, I suppose. *Troja fuit.* I left the borough in the midst of abuse, and the gentle hint of *Burk Sir Walter.* Much obliged to the brave lads of Jeddart.'

Sir Walter fully anticipated a scene of similar violence at the Selkirk election, which occurred a few days afterwards; but though here also, by help of weavers from a distance, there was a sufficiently formidable display of radical power, there occurred hardly anything of what had been apprehended. Here the Sheriff was at home—known intimately to everybody, himself probably knowing almost all of man's estate by head mark, and, in spite of political fanaticism, all but universally beloved as well as feared. The only person who ventured actually to hustle a Tory elector on his way to the poll, attracted Scott's observation at the moment when he was getting out of his carriage; he instantly seized the delinquent with his own hand—the man's spirit quailed, and no one coming to the rescue, he was safely committed to prison until the business of the day was over. Sir Walter had *ex officio* to preside at this election, and, therefore, his family would probably have made no attempt to dissuade him from attending it, even had he stayed away from Jedburgh. Among the exaggerated rumours of the time, was one that Lord William Graham, the Tory candidate for Dumbartonshire, had been actually massacred by the rabble of his county town. He had been grievously maltreated, but escaped murder, though, I believe, narrowly. But I can never forget the high glow which suffused Sir Walter's countenance when he heard the overburdened story, and said calmly, in rather a clear voice, the trace of his calamitous affliction almost disappearing for the moment,—' Well—Lord William died at his post—

Non aliter cineres mando jacere meos.'[1]

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[1] Martial, i. 89.

I am well pleased that the ancient capital of *the Forest* did not stain its fair name upon this miserable occasion; and I am sorry for Jedburgh and Hawick. This last town stands almost within sight of Branksome Hall, overhanging also *sweet Teviot's silver tide.* The civilised American or Australian will curse these places, of which he would never have heard but for Scott, as he passes through them in some distant century, when perhaps all that remains of our national glories may be the high literature adopted and extended in new lands planted from our blood.

No doubt these disturbances of the general election had an unfavourable influence on the invalid. When they were over, he grew calmer and more collected; the surgical experiment appeared to be beneficial; his speech became, after a little time, much clearer, and such were the symptoms of energy still about him, that I began to think a restoration not hopeless. Some business called me to London about the middle of June, and when I returned at the end of three weeks, I had the satisfaction to find that he had been gradually amending.

But, alas! the first use he made of this partial renovation, had been to expose his brain once more to an imaginative task. He began his Castle Dangerous—the groundwork being again an old story which he had told in print, many years before, in a rapid manner.[1] And now, for the first time, he left Ballantyne out of his secret. He thus writes to Cadell on the 3rd of July:—'I intend to tell this little matter to nobody but Lockhart. Perhaps not even to him; certainly not to J. B., who, having turned his back on his old political friends, will no longer have a claim to be a secretary in such matters, though I shall always be glad to befriend him.'

James's criticisms on Count Robert had wounded him—the Diary, already quoted, shows how severely. The last visit this old ally ever paid at Abbotsford, occurred a week or two after. His newspaper had by this time espoused openly the cause of the Reform Bill—and some unpleasant conversation took place on that subject, which might well be a sore one for both parties, and not least, considering the whole of his personal history, for Mr. Ballantyne. Next morning, being Sunday, he disappeared abruptly, without saying farewell; and when Scott understood that he had signified an opinion that the reading of the Church service, with a sermon from South or Barrow, would be a poor substitute for the mystical eloquence of some new idol down the vale, he expressed considerable disgust. They never met again in this world. In truth, Ballantyne's health also was already much broken; and if Scott had been entirely himself, he would not have failed to connect that circumstance in a charitable way with this never strong-minded man's recent abandonment of his own old *terra firma*, both religious and political. But this is a subject on which we have no title to dwell. Sir Walter's misgivings about himself, if I read him aright, now rendered him desirous of external support; but this novel inclination his spirit would fain suppress and disguise even from itself.

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[1] See Essay on Chivalry—Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. vi. p. 36.

When I again saw him on the 13th of this month, he showed me several sheets of the new romance, and told me how he had designed at first to have it printed by somebody else than Ballantyne, but that, on reflection, he had shrunk from hurting his feelings on so tender a point. I found, however, that he had neither invited nor received any opinion from James as to what he had written, but that he had taken an alarm lest he should fall into some blunder about the scenery fixed on (which he had never seen but once when a schoolboy), and had kept the sheets in proof until I should come back and accompany him in a short excursion to Lanarkshire. He was anxious in particular to see the tombs in the Church of St. Bride, adjoining the site of his 'Castle Dangerous,' of which Mr. Blore had shown him drawings; and he hoped to pick up some of the minute traditions, in which he had always delighted, among the inhabitants of Douglasdale.

We set out early on the 18th, and ascended the Tweed, passing in succession Yair, Ashestiel, Innerleithen, Traquair, and many more scenes dear to his early life, and celebrated in his writings. The morning was still, but gloomy, and at length we had some thunder. It seemed to excite him vividly, and on coming soon afterwards within view of that remarkable edifice (Drochel Castle) on the moorland ridge between Tweed and Clyde, which was begun but never finished, by the Regent Morton—a gigantic ruin typical of his ambition—Sir Walter could hardly be restrained from making some effort to reach it. Morton, too, was a Douglas, and that name was at present his charm of charms. We pushed on to Biggar, however, and reaching it towards sunset, were detained there for some time by want of post-horses. It was soon discovered who he was; the population of the little town turned out; and he was evidently gratified with their respectful curiosity. It was the first time I observed him otherwise than annoyed on such an occasion. Jedburgh, no doubt, hung on his mind, and he might be pleased to find that political differences did not interfere everywhere with his reception among his countrymen. But I fancy the cause lay deeper.

Another symptom that distressed me during this journey was, that he seemed constantly to be setting tasks to his memory. It was not as of old, when, if any one quoted a verse, he, from the fulness of his heart, could not help repeating the context. He was obviously in fear that this prodigious engine had lost or was losing its tenacity, and taking every occasion to rub and stretch it. He sometimes failed, and gave it up with *miseria cogitandi* in his eye. At other times he succeeded to admiration, and smiled as he closed his recital. About a mile beyond Biggar, we overtook a parcel of carters, one of whom was maltreating his horse, and Sir Walter called to him from the carriage-window in great indignation. The man looked and spoke insolently; and as we drove on, he used some strong expressions about what he would have done had this happened within the bounds of his sheriffship. As he continued moved in an uncommon degree, I said jokingly, that I wondered his porridge diet had left his blood so warm, and quoted Prior's

Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon a mess of water-gruel?

He smiled graciously, and extemporised this variation of the next couplet—

Yet who shall stand the Sheriff's force,
If *Selkirk* carter beats his horse?[1]

This seemed to put him into the train of Prior, and he repeated several striking passages both of the Alma and the Solomon. He was still at this when we reached a longish hill, and he got out to walk a little. As we climbed the ascent, he leaning heavily on my shoulder, we were met by a couple of beggars, who were, or professed to be, old soldiers both of Egypt and the Peninsula. One of them wanted a leg, which circumstance alone would have opened Scott's purse-strings, though for *ex facie* a sad old blackguard; but the fellow had recognised his person, as it happened, and in asking an alms bade God bless him fervently by his name. The mendicants went on their way, and we stood breathing on the knoll. Sir Walter followed them with his eye, and planting his stick firmly on the sod, repeated without break or hesitation Prior's verses to the historian Mezeray. That he applied them to himself was touchingly obvious, and therefore I must copy them.

'Whate'er thy countrymen have done,
By law and wit, by sword and gun,
  In thee is faithfully recited;
And all the living world that view
Thy works, give thee the praises due—
  At once instructed and delighted.

Yet for the fame of all these deeds,
What beggar in the Invalides,
  With lameness broke, with blindness smitten,
Wished ever decently to die,
To have been either Mezeray—
  Or any monarch he has written?

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[1] But who shall stand his rage and force,
If first he rides, then eats his horse?
Alria.

'Tis strange, dear author, yet it true is,
That down from Pharamond to Louis
All covet life, yet call it pain,
And feel the ill, yet shun the cure.
Can sense this paradox endure?
Resolve me, Cambray, or Fontaine.

The man in graver tragic known,
Though his best part long since was done.
Still on the stage desires to tarry;
And he who play'd the harlequin,
After the jest, still loads the scene,
Unwilling to retire, though weary.'

We spent the night at the Inn of Douglas Mill, and at an early hour next morning proceeded to inspect, under the care of one of Lord Douglas's tenants, Mr. Haddow, the Castle, the strange old *bourg*, the Church, long since deserted as a place of worship, and the very extraordinary monuments of the most heroic and powerful family in the annals of Scotland. That works of sculpture equal to any of the fourteenth century in Westminster Abbey (for such they certainly were, though much mutilated by Cromwell's soldiery) should be found in so remote an inland place, attests strikingly the boundless resources of those haughty lords, 'whose coronet,' as Scott says, 'so often counterpoised the crown.' The effigy of the best friend of Bruce is among the number, and represents him cross-legged, as having fallen in battle with the Saracen, when on his way to Jerusalem with the heart of his king. —The whole people of the barony gathered round the doors, and two persons of extreme old age, one so old that he well remembered *Duke Willie*—that is to say, the Conqueror of Culloden—were introduced to tell all their local legends, while Sir Walter examined by torchlight these silent witnesses of past greatness. It was a strange and a melancholy scene, and its recollection prompted some passages in Castle Dangerous, which might almost have been written at the same time with Lammermoor. The appearance of the village, too, is most truly transferred to the novel; and I may say the same of the surrounding landscape. We descended into a sort of crypt in which the Douglases were buried until about a century ago, when there was room for no more; the leaden coffins around the wall being piled on each other, until the lower ones had been pressed flat as sheets of pasteboard, while the floor itself was entirely paved with others of comparatively modern date, on which coronets and inscriptions might still be traced. Here the silver case that once held the noble heart of the Good Lord James himself, is still pointed out. It is in the form of a heart, which, in memory of his glorious mission and fate, occupies ever since the chief place in the blazon of his posterity:—

> The bloody heart blazed in the van,
> Announcing Douglas' dreaded name.

This charnel-house, too, will be recognised easily. Of the redoubted Castle itself, there remains but a small detached fragment covered with ivy close to the present mansion; but he hung over it long, or rather sat beside it, drawing outlines on the turf, and arranging in his fancy the sweep of the old precincts. Before the subjacent and surrounding lake and morass were drained, the position must indeed have been the perfect model of solitary strength.—The crowd had followed us, and were lingering about to see him once more as he got into his carriage. They attended him to the spot where it was waiting, in perfect silence. It was not like a mob, but a procession. He was again obviously gratified, and saluted them with an earnest yet placid air, as he took his leave. He expresses in his Introduction much thankfulness for the attention of Mr. Haddow, and also of Lord Douglas's chamberlain, Mr. Finlay, who had joined us at the Castle.

It was again a darkish cloudy day, with some occasional mutterings of distant thunder, and perhaps the state of the atmosphere told upon Sir Walter's nerves; but I had never before seen him so sensitive as he was all the morning after this inspection of Douglas. As we drove over the high table-land of Lesmahago, he repeated I know not how many verses from Winton, Barbour, and

Blind Harry, with, I believe, almost every stanza of Dunbar's elegy on the deaths of the Makers (poets). It was now that I saw him, such as he paints himself in one or two passages of his Diary, but such as his companions in the meridian vigour of his life never saw him—'the rushing of a brook, or the sighing of the summer breeze, bringing the tears into his eyes not unpleasantly.' Bodily weakness laid the delicacy of the organization bare, over which he had prided himself in wearing a sort of half-stoical mask. High and exalted feelings, indeed, he had never been able to keep concealed, but he had shrunk from exhibiting to human eye the softer and gentler emotions which now trembled to the surface. He strove against it even now, and presently came back from the Lament of the Makers to his Douglases, and chanted, rather than repeated, in a sort of deep and glowing, though not distinct recitative, his first favourite among all the ballads,—

It was about the Lammas tide,
  When husbandmen do win their hay,
That the Doughty Douglas bownde him to ride
  To England to drive a prey,—

down to the closing stanzas, which again left him in tears,—

'My wound is deep—I fain would sleep—
  Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me beneath the bracken-bush,
  That grows on yonder lily lee. . . .'
This deed was done at the Otterburne,
  About the dawning of the day.
Earl Douglas was buried by the bracken-bush,
  And the Percy led captive away.

We reached Milton-Lockhart some time before the dinner-hour, and Sir Walter appeared among the friends who received him there with much of his old graceful composure of courtesy. He walked about a little—was pleased with the progress made in the new house, and especially commended my brother for having given his bridge 'ribs like Bothwell.' Greenshields was at hand,

and he talked to him cheerfully, while the sculptor devoured his features, as under a solemn sense that they were before his eyes for the last time. My brother had taken care to have no company at dinner except two or three near neighbours with whom Sir Walter had been familiar through life, and whose entreaties it had been impossible to resist. One of these was the late Mr. Elliott Lockhart of Cleghorn and Borthwickbrae—long member of Parliament for Selkirkshire—the same whose anti-reform address had been preferred to the Sheriff's by the freeholders of that county in the preceding March. But, alas! very soon after that address was accepted, Borthwickbrae (so Scott always called him from his estate in the Forest) had a shock of paralysis as severe as any his old friend had as yet sustained. He, too, had rallied beyond expectation, and his family were more hopeful, perhaps, than the other's dared to be. Sir Walter and he had not met for a few years—not since they rode side by side, as I well remember, on a merry day's sport at Bowhill; and I need not tell any one who knew Borthwickbrae, that a finer or more gallant specimen of the Border gentleman than he was in his prime, never cheered a hunting-field. When they now met (*heu quantum mutati!*) each saw his own case glassed in the other, and neither of their manly hearts could well contain itself as they embraced. Each exerted himself to the utmost—indeed far too much, and they were both tempted to transgress the laws of their physicians.

At night Scott promised to visit Cleghorn on his way home, but next morning, at breakfast, came a messenger to inform us that Borthwickbrae, on returning to his own house, fell down in another fit, and was now despaired of. Immediately, although he had intended to remain two days, Sir Walter drew my brother aside, and besought him to lend him horses as far as Lanark, for that he must set off with the least possible delay. He would listen to no persuasions.—'No, William,' he said, 'this is a sad warning. I must home to work while it is called day; for the night cometh when no man can work. I put that text, many a year ago, on my dial-stone; but it often preached in vain.'[1]

We started accordingly, and making rather a forced march, reached Abbotsford the same night. During the journey he was more silent than I ever before found him;—he seemed to be wrapped in thought, and was but seldom roused to take notice of any object we passed. The little he said was mostly about Castle Dangerous, which he now seemed to feel sure he could finish in a fortnight, though his observation of the locality must needs cost the re-writing of several passages in the chapters already put into type.

For two or three weeks he bent himself sedulously to his task—and concluded Castle Dangerous, and the long-suspended Count Robert. By this time he had submitted to the recommendation of all his medical friends, and agreed to spend the coming winter away from Abbotsford, among new scenes, in a more genial climate, and above all (so he promised), in complete abstinence from all literary labour. When Captain Basil Hall understood that he had resolved on wintering at Naples (where, as has been mentioned, his son Charles was attached to the British Legation), it occurred to the zealous sailor that on such an occasion as this all thoughts of political difference ought to be dismissed, and he, unknown to Scott, addressed a letter to Sir James Graham, then First Lord of the Admiralty, stating the condition of his friend's health, and his proposed plan, and suggesting that it would be a fit and graceful thing for the King's Government to place a frigate at his disposal for his voyage to the Mediterranean. Sir James replied, honourably for all concerned, that it afforded himself, and his Royal Master, the sincerest satisfaction to comply with this hint; and that whenever Sir Walter found it convenient to come southwards, a vessel should be prepared for his reception. Nothing could be handsomer than the way in which all this matter was arranged, and Scott, deeply gratified, exclaimed that things were yet in the hands of gentlemen; but that he feared they had been undermining the state of society which required such persons as themselves to be at the head.

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[1] This dial-stone, which used to stand in front of the old cottage, and is now in the centre of the garden, is inscribed, ΝΥΞ ΓΑΡ ΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ.

He had no wish, however, to leave Abbotsford until the approach of winter; and having dismissed his Tales, seemed to say to himself that he would enjoy his dear valley for the intervening weeks, draw friends about him, revisit all the familiar scenes in his neighbourhood once more; and if he were never to come back, store himself with the most agreeable recollections in his power, and so conduct himself as to bequeath to us who surrounded him a last stock of gentle impressions. He continued to work a little at his notes and prefaces, the *Reliquiæ* of Oldbuck, and the *Sylva Abbotsfordiensis;* but did not fatigue himself; and when once all plans were settled, and all cares in so far as possible set aside, his health and spirits certainly rallied most wonderfully. He had settled that my wife and I should dine at Abbotsford, and he and Anne at Chiefswood, day about; and this rule was seldom departed from. Both at home and in the cottage he was willing to have a few guests, so they were not strangers. Mr. James (the author of Richelieu) and his lady, who this season lived at Maxpoffle, and Mr. Archdeacon Williams, who was spending his vacation at Melrose, were welcome additions, and frequently so, to his accustomed circle of the Scotts of Harden, the Pringles of Whytbank and Clifton, the Russells of Ashestiel, the Brewsters, and the Fergussons. Sir Walter observed the prescribed diet, on the whole, pretty accurately; and seemed, when in the midst of his family and friends, always tranquil, sometimes cheerful. On one or two occasions he was even gay: particularly, I think, when the weather was so fine as to tempt us to dine in the marble-hall at Abbotsford, or at an early hour under the trees at Chiefswood, in the old fashion of Rose's *Fête de Village.* I rather think Mr. Adolphus was present at one of these (for the time) mirthful doings; but if so, he has not recorded it in his elegant paper of reminiscences—from which I now take my last extract :—

'In the autum of 1831' (says Mr. Adolphus) 'the new shock which had fallen upon Sir Walter's constitution had left traces, not indeed very conspicuous, but painfully observable ; and he was subject to a constant, though apparently not a very severe regimen, as an invalid. At table, if many persons were present, he spoke but little, I believe from a difficulty in making himself heard—not so much because his articulation was slightly impaired, as that his voice was weakened. After dinner, though he still sat with his guests, he forbore drinking, in compliance with the discipline prescribed to him, though he might be seen, once or twice in the course of a sitting, to steal a glass, as if inadvertently. I could not perceive that his faculties of mind were in any respect obscured, except that occasionally (but not very often) he was at a loss for some obvious word. This failure of recollection had begun, I think, the year before. The remains of his old cheerfulness were still living within him, but they required opportunity and the presence of few persons to disclose themselves. He spoke of his approaching voyage with resignation more than with hope, and I could not find that he looked forward with much interest or curiosity to the new scenes in which he was about to travel.

'The menacing state of affairs in the country he was leaving oppressed him with melancholy anticipations. In the little conversation we had formerly had on subjects of this kind, I had never found him a querulous politician ; he could look manfully and philosophically at those changes in the aspect of society which time, and the progress, well or ill directed, of the human mind, were uncontrollably working out, though the innovations might not in some of their results accord with his own tastes and opinions. But the revolutions now beginning, and the violence of word and deed with which they were urged on, bore heavily upon his thoughts, and gave them, when turned in this direction, a gloomy and ominous cast.

When I left him to go to London, he gave me, as a kind of parting token, a stick, or rather club, of formidable size and figure, and, as he put it into my hand, he could not help saying, between joke and earnest, that it might prove useful if I were called out to assist the police in a riot. But his prevailing humour, even at this period, was kindly, genial, and pleasurable.

'On the last day which I had the happiness to pass with him among his own hills and streams, he appointed an excursion to *Oakwood*[1] and the Linns of Ettrick. Miss Scott, and two other ladies, one of whom had not been in Scotland before, were of the party. He did the honours of the country with as much zeal and gallantry, in spirit at least, as he could have shown twenty years earlier. I recollect, that, in setting out, he attempted to plead his hardy habits as an old mail-coach traveller for keeping the least convenient place in the carriage. When we came to the Linns, we walked some way up the stream, and viewed the bold and romantic little torrent from the top of the high bank. He stood contemplating it in an attitude of rest; the day was past when a minute's active exertion would have carried him to the water's brink. Perhaps he was now for the last time literally fulfilling the wish of his own Minstrel, that in the decay of life he might

> Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break.

So much was his great strength reduced, that, as he gazed upon the water, one of his stag-hounds leaping forward to caress him had almost thrown him down; but for such accidents as this he cared very little. We travelled merrily homeward. As we went up some hill, a couple of children hung on the back of the carriage. He suspended his cudgel over them with a grotesque face of awfulness. The brats understood the countenance, and only clung the faster. "They do not much mind the Sheriff," said he to us, with a serio-comic smile, and affecting to speak low. We came home late, and an order was issued that no one should dress. Though I believe he himself caused the edict to be made, he transgressed it more than any of the party.'

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[1] Oakwood is a ruined tower on the Harden estate in the vale of Ettrick.

I am not sure whether the Royal Academician, Turner, was at Abbotsford at the time of Mr. Adolphus's last visit; but several little excursions, such as the one here described, were made in the company of this great artist, who had come to Scotland for the purpose of making drawings to illustrate the scenery of Sir Walter's poems. On several such occasions I was of the party—and one day deserves to be specially remembered. Sir Walter took Mr. Turner that morning, with his friend Skene and myself, to Smailholm Crags; and it was while lounging about them, while the painter did his sketch, that he told Mr. Skene how the habit of lying on the turf there among the sheep and lambs, when a lame infant, had given his mind a peculiar tenderness for those animals which it had ever since retained.[1] He seemed to enjoy the scene of his childhood—yet there was many a touch of sadness both in his eye and his voice. He then carried us to Dryburgh, but excused himself from attending Mr. Turner into the inclosure. Mr. Skene and I perceived that it would be better for us to leave him alone, and we both accompanied Turner. Lastly, we must not omit to call at Bemerside—for of that ancient residence of the most ancient family now subsisting on Tweedside, he was resolved there must be a fit memorial by this graceful hand. The good laird and lady were of course flattered with this fondness of respect, and after walking about a little while among the huge old trees that surround the tower, we ascended to, I think, the third tier of its vaulted apartments, and had luncheon in a stately hall, arched also in stone, but with well-sized windows (as being out of harm's way) duly blazoned with shields and crests, and the time-honoured motto, BETIDE, BETIDE—being the first words of a prophetic couplet ascribed to Thomas the Rhymer:—

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[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 66.

Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
There shall be Haigs in Bemerside.

Mr. Turner's sketch of this picturesque Peel, and its 'brotherhood of venerable trees,' is probably familiar to most of my readers.[1]

Mr. Cadell brought the artist to Abbotsford, and was also I think of this Bemerside party. I must not omit to record how gratefully all Sir Walter's family felt at the time, and still remember, the delicate and watchful tenderness of Mr. Cadell's conduct on this occasion. He so managed that the Novels just finished should remain in types, but not thrown off until the author should have departed; so as to give opportunity for revising and abridging them. He might well be the bearer of cheering news as to their greater concerns, for the sale of the *Magnum* had, in spite of political turbulences and distractions, gone on successfully. But he probably strained a point to make things appear still better than they really were. He certainly spoke so as to satisfy his friend that he need give himself no sort of uneasiness about the pecuniary results of idleness and travel. It was about this time that we observed Sir Walter beginning to entertain the notion that his debts were paid off. By degrees, dwelling on this fancy, he believed in it fully and implicitly. It was a gross delusion—but neither Cadell nor any one else had the heart to disturb it by any formal statement of figures. It contributed greatly more than any circumstance besides to soothe Sir Walter's feelings, when it became at last necessary that he should tear himself from his land and his house, and the trees which he had nursed. And with all that was done and forborne, the hour when it came was a most heavy one.

Very near the end there came some unexpected things to cast a sunset brilliancy over Abbotsford. His son, the Major, arrived with tidings that he had obtained leave of absence from his regiment, and should be in readiness to sail with his father. This was a mighty relief to us all, on Miss Scott's account as well as his, for my occupations did not permit me to think of going with him, and there was no other near connexion at hand. But Sir Walter was delighted—indeed, dearly as he loved all his children, he had a pride in the Major that stood quite by itself, and the hearty approbation which looked through his eyes whenever turned on him, sparkled brighter than ever as his own physical strength decayed. Young Walter had on this occasion sent down a horse or two to winter at Abbotsford. One was a remarkably tall and handsome animal, jet black all over, and when the Major appeared on it one morning, equipped for a little sport with the greyhounds, Sir Walter insisted on being put upon Douce Davie, and conducted as far as the Cauldshiels Loch to see the day's work begun. He halted on the high bank to the north of the lake, and I remained to hold his bridle, in case of any frisk on the part of the Covenanter at the 'tumult great of dogs and men.' We witnessed a very pretty chase or two on the opposite side of the water—but his eye followed always the tall black steed and his rider. The father might well assure Lady Davy, that a 'handsomer fellow never put foot into stirrup.' But when he took a very high wall of loose stones, at which everybody else *craned*, as easily and elegantly as if it had been a puddle in his stride, the old man's rapture was extreme. 'Look at him,' said he—'only look at him. Now, isn't he a fine fellow?'—This was the last time, I believe, that Sir Walter mounted on horseback.

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[1] See Scott's Poetical Works, edition 1833, vol. v.

He does not seem to have written many farewell letters; but here is one to a very old friend, Mr. Kirkpatrick Sharpe. He had, apparently, subscribed for Lodge's splendid book of British Portraits, and then, receiving a copy *ex dono auctoris*,[1] sent his own numbers, as they arrived, to this gentleman—a payment in kind for many courteous gifts and communications of antiquarian and genealogical interest.

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[1] Sir Walter's letter to Mr. Lodge's publisher is now prefixed to that magnificent book; the circulation of which has been, to the honour of the public, so great, that I need not introduce the beautiful eulogium here.

'*To Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.,*
Prince's Street, Edinburgh.

'ABBOTSFORD, *September* 1831.

'MY DEAR CHARLES—I pray you to honour me with your acceptance of the last number of Mr. Lodge's Illustrious Persons. My best thanks to you for the genealogy, which completes a curious subject. I am just setting off for the Mediterranean—a singular instance of a change of luck, for I have no sooner put my damaged fortune into as good a condition as I could desire, than my health, which till now has been excellent, has failed so utterly in point of strength, that while it will not allow me to amuse myself by travelling, neither will it permit me to stay at home.

'I should like to have shaken hands with you, as there are few I regret so much to part with. But it may not be. I will keep my eyes dry if possible, and therefore content myself with bidding you a long (perhaps an eternal) farewell. But I may find my way home again, improved as a Dutch skipper from a whale fishing. I am very happy that I am like to see Malta.—Always yours, well or ill, WALTER SCOTT.'

The same deceptive notion of his pecuniary affairs comes out in another little note, the last I ever received from him at Chiefswood. I had meant to make a run into Lanarkshire for a day or two to see my own relations, and spoken of carrying my second boy, his namesake, then between five and six years of age, with me in the stage-coach. When I mentioned this over-night at Abbotsford, he said nothing—indeed he was at the moment a little cross with me for having spoken against some slip he had made on the score of his regimen. Shortly after I got home came this billet:—

'*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Chiefswood.*

'DEAR DON OR DOCTOR GIOVANNI—Can you really be thinking of taking Wa-Wa by the coach—and I think you said outside? Think of Johnny, and be careful of this little man. Are you *par hazard* something in the state of the poor Capitaine des Dragons that comes in singing—

> Comment? Parbleu! Qu'en pensez vous?
> Bon Gentilhomme, et pas un sous.

'If so, remember "Richard's himself again," and make free use of the enclosed cheque on Cadell for £50. He will give you the ready as you pass through, and you can pay when I ask. Put horses to your carriage, and go hidalgo fashion. We shall all have good days yet.

> And those sad days you deign to spend
> With me, I shall requite them all;
> Sir Eustace for his friends shall send,
> And thank their love in Grayling hall.[1]

'W. S.'

On the 17th of September the old splendour of Abbotsford was, after a long interval, and for the last time, revived. Captain James Glencairn Burns, son of the poet, had come home on furlough from India, and Sir Walter invited him (with his wife, and their Cicerones Mr. and Mrs. M'Diarmid of Dumfries) to spend a day under his roof. The neighbouring gentry were assembled, and having his son to help him, Sir Walter did most gracefully the honours of the table. As, according to him, 'a medal struck at the time, however poor, is in one respect better than any done afterwards,' I insert some verses with which he was pleased, and which, I believe, express the sincere feelings with which every guest witnessed this his parting feast:—

LINES WRITTEN ON TWEEDSIDE

September the 18*th*, 1831

> A day I've seen whose brightness pierced the cloud
>   Of pain and sorrow, both for great and small—
> A night of flowing cups, and pibrochs loud,
>   Once more within the Minstrel's blazon'd hall.

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[1] See Crabbe's *Sir Eustace Grey*.

'Upon this frozen hearth pile crackling trees ;
  Let every silent clarshach find its strings ;
Unfurl once more the banner to the breeze ;
  No warmer welcome for the blood of kings !'

From ear to ear, from eye to glistening eye,
  Leap the glad tidings, and the glance of glee ;
Perish the hopeless breast that beats not high
  At thought beneath His roof that guest to see !

What princely stranger comes ?—what exiled lord
  From the far East to Scotia's strand returns—
To stir with joy the towers of Abbotsford,
  And 'wake the Minstrel's soul' ?—The boy of Burns.

O, Sacred Genius ! blessing on the chains,
  Wherein thy sympathy can minds entwine !
Beyond the conscious glow of kindred veins,
  A power, a spirit, and a charm are thine.

Thine offspring share them. Thou hast trod the land—
  It breathes of thee—and men, through rising tears,
Behold the image of thy manhood stand,
  More noble than a galaxy of Peers.

And He —— his father's bones had quaked, I ween,
  But that with holier pride his heart-strings bound,
Than if his host had King or Kaiser been,
  And star and cross on every bosom round.

High strains were pour'd of many a Border spear,
  While gentle fingers swept a throbbing shell ;
A manly voice, in manly notes and clear,
  Of lowly love's deep bliss responded well.

The children sang the ballads of their sires :—
  Serene among them sat the hoary Knight ;
And, if dead Bards have ears for earthly lyres,
  The Peasant's shade was near, and drank delight.

As through the woods we took our homeward way,
  Fair shone the moon last night on Eildon Hill ;
Soft rippled Tweed's broad wave beneath her ray,
  And in sweet murmurs gush'd the Huntly rill.

Heaven send the guardian genius of the vale
  Health yet, and strength, and length of honoured days.
To cheer the world with many a gallant tale,
  And hear his children's children chant his lays.

Through seas unruffled may the vessel glide,
That bears her Poet far from Melrose' glen!
And may his pulse be steadfast as our pride,
When happy breezes waft him back again!

On the 20th Mrs. Lockhart set out for London to prepare for her father's reception there, and for the outfit of his voyage; and on the following day Mr. Wordsworth and his daughter arrived from Westmoreland to take farewell of him. This was a very fortunate circumstance—nothing could have gratified Sir Walter more, or sustained him better, if he needed any support from without. On the 22nd—all his arrangements being completed, and Laidlaw having received a paper of instructions, the last article of which repeats the caution to be 'very careful of the dogs'—these two great poets, who had through life loved each other well, and, in spite of very different theories as to art, appreciated each other's genius more justly than inferior spirits ever did either of them, spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. Hence the last of the three poems by which Wordsworth has connected his name to all time with the most romantic of Scottish streams. But I need not transcribe a piece so well known as the 'Yarrow Revisited.'

Sitting that evening in the library, Sir Walter said a good deal about the singularity that Fielding and Smollett had both been driven abroad by declining health, and never returned—which circumstance, though his language was rather cheerful at this time, he had often before alluded to in a darker fashion; and Mr. Wordsworth expressed his regret that neither of those great masters of romance appeared to have been surrounded with any due marks of respect in the close of life. I happened to observe that Cervantes, on his last journey to Madrid, met with an incident which seemed to have given him no common satisfaction. Sir Walter did not remember the passage, and desired me to find it out in the life by Pellicer which was at hand, and translate it. I did so, and he listened with lively though pensive interest. Our friend Allan, the historical painter, had also come out that day from Edinburgh, and he lately told me that he remembers nothing he ever saw with so much sad pleasure as the attitudes and aspect of Scott and Wordsworth as the story went on. Mr. Wordsworth was at that time, I should notice—though indeed his noble stanzas tell it—in but a feeble state of general health. He was, moreover, suffering so much from some malady in his eyes that he wore a deep green shade over them. Thus he sat between Sir Walter and his daughter: *absit omen*—but it was no wonder that Allan thought as much of Milton as of Cervantes. The anecdote of the young student's raptures on discovering that he had been riding all day with the author of Don Quixote, is introduced in the preface for Count Robert, and Castle Dangerous, which (for I may not return to the subject) came out at the close of November in four volumes, as the Fourth Series of Tales of My Landlord.

The following Sonnet was, no doubt, composed by Mr. Wordsworth that same evening of the 22nd September:—

A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height:
Spirits of power assembled there complain
For kindred power departing from their sight;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye mourners! for the might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptred King or laurelled Conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous potentate. Be true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your charge to soft Parthenope.

CHAPTER LXXXI

Rokeby—London—Epitaph on Helen Walker—Portsmouth—Voyage in the Barham—Graham's Island—Letter to Mr. Skene—Malta—Notes by Mrs. John Davy.

SEPT.—DEC. 1831

EARLY on the 23rd of September, Sir Walter left Abbotsford, attended by his daughter Anne, and myself, and we reached London by easy stages on the 28th, having spent one day at Rokeby. I have nothing to mention of this journey except that, notwithstanding all his infirmities, he would not pass any object to which he had ever attached special interest, without getting out of the carriage to revisit it. His anxiety (for example) about the gigantic British or Danish effigy in the churchyard at Penrith, which we had all seen dozens of times before, seemed as great as if not a year had fled since 1797. It may be supposed that his parting with Mr. Morritt was a grave one. Finding that he had left the ring he then usually wore behind him at one of the inns on the road, he wrote to his friend to make enquiries after it, as it had been dug out of the ruins of Hermitage Castle, and probably belonged of yore to one of the 'Dark Knights of Liddesdale'; and if recovered, to keep it until he should come back to reclaim it, but, in the meantime, to wear it for his sake. The ring, which is a broad belt of silver, with an angel holding the Heart of Douglas, was found, and is now worn by Mr. Morritt.

Sir Walter arrived in London in the midst of the

Lords' debates on the second Reform Bill, and the ferocious demonstrations of the populace on its rejection were in part witnessed by him. He saw the houses of several of the chief Tories, and above all, that of the Duke of Wellington, shattered and almost sacked. He heard of violence offered to the persons of some of his own noble friends; and having been invited to attend the christening of the infant heir of Buccleuch, whose godfather the King had proposed to be, on a day appointed by his Majesty, he had the pain to understand that the ceremony must be adjourned, because it was not considered safe for his Majesty to visit, for such a purpose, the palace of one of his most amiable as well as illustrious peers.

The following is part of a letter which I lately received from Sir Walter's dear friend and kinsman, Mr. Scott of Gala:—'The last time I saw Sir W. Scott was in Sussex Place, the day after he arrived from Scotland, on his way to Italy. I was prepared for a change in his appearance, but was not struck with so great a one as I had expected. He evidently had lost strength since I saw him at Abbotsford the previous autumn, but his eye was good. In his articulation, however, there was too manifest an imperfection. We conversed shortly, as may be supposed, on his health. "Weakness," he observed, "was his principal complaint." I said that I supposed he had been rather too fatigued with his journey to leave the house since his arrival. "Oh no," he replied, "I felt quite able for a drive to-day, and have just come from the city. I paid a visit to my friend Whittaker to ask him for some book of travels likely to be of use to me on my expedition to the Mediterranean. Here's old Brydone accordingly, still as good a companion as any he could recommend." "A very agreeable one certainly," I replied.—"Brydone" (said he) "was sadly failed during his latter years. Did you ever hear of his remark on his own works?"—"Never."—"Why, his family usually read a little for his amusement of an evening, and on one occasion he was asked if he would like to hear some of his travels to Sicily. He assented, and seemed to listen with much pleasure for some time, but he was too far gone to continue his attention long, and starting up from a doze exclaimed, 'That's really a very amusing book, and contains many curious anecdotes—I wonder if they are all true.'"—Sir Walter then spoke of as strange a tale as any traveller could imagine—a new volcanic island, viz., which had appeared very lately—and seemed anxious to see it, "if it would *wait* for him," he said. The offer of a King's ship had gratified him, and he ascribed this very much to the exertions of Basil Hall: "That curious fellow," said he, "who takes charge of every one's business without neglecting his own, has done a great deal for me in this matter."—I observed that Malta would interest him much. The history of the knights, their library, etc., he immediately entered on keenly.—"I fear I shall not be able to appreciate Italy as it deserves," continued he, "as I understand little of painting, and nothing of music."—"But there are many other subjects of interest," I replied, "and to you particularly—Naples, St. Elmo, Pæstum, La Montagna, Pompeii—in fact, I am only afraid you may have *too* much excitement, the bad effects of which I, as an invalid, am too well aware of."—I had before this, from my own experience, ventured several hints on the necessity of caution with regard to over-exertion, but to these he always lent an unwilling ear.

'Sir Walter often digressed during our conversation, to the state of the country, about which he seemed to have much anxiety. I said we had no Napoleon to frighten us into good fellowship, and from want of something to do, began fighting with each other—"Ay," said he, "after conquering that Jupiter Scapin, and being at the height of glory, one would think the people might be content to sit down and eat the pudding; but no such thing."—"When we've paid more of the cash it has cost, they will be more content."—"I doubt it: they are so flattered and courted by Government, that their appetite for power (pampered as it is) won't be easily satisfied now."—When talking of Italy, by the way, I mentioned that at Naples he would probably find a sister of Mat.

Lewis's, Lady Lushington, wife of the English consul, a pleasant family, to whom Lewis introduced me when there in 1817 *very kindly*;—"Ah, poor Mat.!" said he; "he never wrote anything so good as the Monk—he had certainly talents, but they would not stand much *creaming*."

'The Forest and our *new road* (which had cost both so much consultation) were of course touched on. The foundation of one of the new bridges had been laid by him—and *this* should be *commemorated* by an inscription on it.—"Well," said he, "how I should like to have a ride with you along our new road, just opposite Abbotsford—I will hope to be able for it some day." Most heartily did I join in the wish, and could not help flattering myself it might *yet* be possible. When we parted, he shook hands with me for some time. He did so once more—but added firmly—"Well, we'll have a ride yet, some day." I pleased myself with the hope that he augured rightly. But on leaving him, many misgivings presented themselves; and the accounts from the continent served but too surely to confirm these apprehensions—never more did I meet with my illustrious friend. There is reason I believe to be thankful that it was so—nothing could have been more painful than to witness the wreck of a *mind* like this.'

During his stay, which was till the 23rd of October, Sir Walter called on many of his old friends; but he accepted of no hospitalities except breakfasting once with Sir Robert Inglis, on Clapham Common, and once or twice with Lady Gifford at Roehampton. Usually he worked a little in the morning at notes for the *Magnum*.

Dr. Robert Fergusson, one of the family with which Sir Walter had lived all his days in such brother-like affection, saw him constantly while he remained in the Regent's Park; and though neither the invalid nor his children could fancy any other medical advice necessary, it was only due to Fergusson that some of his seniors should be called in occasionally with him. Sir Henry Halford (whom Scott reverenced as the friend of Baillie) and Dr. Holland (an esteemed friend of his own) came accordingly; and all the three concurred in recognising certain evidence that there was incipient disease in the brain. There were still, however, such symptoms of remaining vigour, that they flattered themselves, if their patient would submit to a total intermission of all literary labour during some considerable space of time, the malady might yet be arrested. When they left him after the first inspection, they withdrew into an adjoining room, and on soon rejoining him found, that in the interim he had wheeled his chair into a dark corner, so that he might see their faces without their being able to read his. When he was informed of the comparatively favourable views they entertained, he expressed great thankfulness; promised to obey all their directions as to diet and repose most scrupulously; and he did not conceal from them that 'he had feared insanity and feared *them*.'

The following are extracts from his Diary:—'*London, October* 2, 1831.—I have been very ill, and if not quite unable to write, I have been unfit to do it. I have wrought, however, at two Waverley things, but not well. A total prostration of bodily strength is my chief complaint. I cannot walk half a mile. There is, besides, some mental confusion, with the extent of which I am not, perhaps, fully acquainted. I am perhaps setting. I am myself inclined to think so, and like a day that has been admired as a fine one, the light of it sets down amid mists and storms. I neither regret nor fear the approach of death, if it is coming. I would compound for a little pain instead of this heartless muddiness of mind. The expense of this journey, etc. will be considerable; yet these heavy burdens could be easily borne if I were to be the Walter Scott I once was—but the change is great. And the ruin which I fear involves that of my country. Well says Colin Mackenzie—

> Shall this Desolation strike thy towers alone?
> No, fair Ellandonan! such ruin 'twill bring,
> That the whirl shall have power to unsettle the throne,
> And thy fate shall be link'd with the fate of thy king.[1]

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[1] See Ballad of Ellandonan Castle in the Minstrelsy.—Poetical Works, vol. iv. p. 361.

We arrived in London after a long journey—the weakness of my limbs palpably increasing, and the medicine prescribed making me weaker every day. Lockhart, poor fellow, is as attentive as possible, and I have, thank God, no pain whatever; could the decay but be so easy at last, it would be too happy. But I fancy the instances of Euthanasia are not in very serious cases very common. Instances there certainly are among the learned and the unlearned—Dr. Black, Tom Purdie. I should like, if it pleased God, to slip off in such a quiet way; but we must take what fate sends. I have not warm hopes of being myself again.

'*October* 12.—Lord Mahon, a very amiable as well as clever young man, comes to dinner with Mr. Croker, Lady Louisa Stuart, and Sir John Malcolm. Sir John told us a story about Garrick and his wife. The lady admired her husband greatly, but blamed him for a taste for low life, and insisted that he loved better to play Scrub to a low-lifed audience than one of his superior characters before an audience of taste. On one particular occasion she was at her box in the theatre. Richard III. was the performance, and Garrick's acting, particularly in the night-scene, drew down universal applause. After the play was over, Mrs. G. proposed going home, which Garrick declined, alleging he had some business in the green-room which must detain him. In short, the lady was obliged to acquiesce, and wait the beginning of a new entertainment, in which was introduced a farmer giving his neighbours an account of the wonders seen in a visit to London. This character was received with such peals of applause that Mrs. Garrick began to think it exceeded those which had been so lately lavished on Richard the Third. At last she observed her little spaniel dog was making efforts to get towards the balcony which separated him from the facetious farmer—and then she became aware of the truth. "How strange," he said, "that a dog should know his master, and a woman, in the same circumstances, should not recognise her husband!"

'*October* 16.—A pleasant breakfast at Roehampton, where I met my good friend Lord Sidmouth. On my way back, I called to see the repairs at Lambeth, which are proceeding under the able direction of Blore, who met me there. They are in the best Gothic taste, and executed at the expense of a large sum, to be secured by way of mortgage payable in fifty years, each incumbent within the time paying a proportion of about £4000 a year. I was pleased to see this splendour of church architecture returning again.

'*October* 18.—Sophia had a small but lively party last night, as indeed she has had every night since we were here—Lady Stafford, Lady Louisa Stuart, Lady Montagu, Miss Montagu, Lady Davy, Mrs. M'Leod, and her girls — Lord Montagu, Macleod, Lord Audley, Rogers, Mackintosh. A good deal of singing.'

Sir Walter seemed to enjoy having one or two friends to meet him at dinner—and a few more in the evenings. Those named in the last entries came all of them frequently —and so did Lord Melville, the Bishop of Exeter, Lord Ashley, Sir David Wilkie, Mr. Thomas Moore, Mr. Milman, and Mr. Washington Irving. At this time the Reform Bill for Scotland was in discussion in the House of Commons. Mr. Croker made a very brilliant speech in opposition to it, and was not sorry to have it said, that he had owed his inspiration, in no small degree, to having risen from the table at which Scott sat by his side. But the most regular of the evening visitors was, I think, Sir James Mackintosh. He was himself in very feeble health; and whatever might have been the auguries of others, it struck me that there was uppermost with him at every parting the anticipation that they might never meet again. Sir James's kind assiduity was the more welcome, that his appearance banished the politics of the hour, on which his old friend's thoughts were too apt to brood. Their conversation, wherever it might begin, was sure to fasten ere long on Lochaber.

When last in Edinburgh, Scott had given his friend William Burn, architect, directions to prepare at his expense a modest monument, for the grave of Helen Walker, the original of Jeanie Deans, in the churchyard of Irongrey. Mr. Burn now informed him that the little pillar was in readiness, and on the 18th October Sir Walter sent him this beautiful inscription for it :—

> THIS STONE WAS ERECTED
> BY THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY
> TO THE MEMORY
> OF
> HELEN WALKER,
> WHO DIED IN THE YEAR OF GOD, 1791.
> THIS HUMBLE INDIVIDUAL
> PRACTISED IN REAL LIFE
> THE VIRTUES
> WITH WHICH FICTION HAS INVESTED
> THE IMAGINARY CHARACTER OF
> JEANIE DEANS;
> REFUSING THE SLIGHTEST DEPARTURE
> FROM VERACITY,
> EVEN TO SAVE THE LIFE OF A SISTER,
> SHE NEVERTHELESS SHOWED HER
> KINDNESS AND FORTITUDE,
> IN RESCUING HER FROM THE SEVERITY OF THE LAW,
> AT THE EXPENSE OF PERSONAL EXERTIONS
> WHICH THE TIME RENDERED AS DIFFICULT
> AS THE MOTIVE WAS LAUDABLE.
> RESPECT THE GRAVE OF POVERTY
> WHEN COMBINED WITH LOVE OF TRUTH
> AND DEAR AFFECTION.

It was on this day also that he completed the preface for his forthcoming Tales ; and the conclusion is so remarkable that I must copy it :—

> The gentle reader is acquainted, that these are, in all probability, the last tales which it will be the lot of the Author to submit to the public. He is now on the eve of visiting foreign parts ; a ship of war is commissioned by its Royal Master to carry the Author of Waverley

to climates in which he may possibly obtain such a restoration of health as may serve him to spin his thread to an end in his own country. Had he continued to prosecute his usual literary labours, it seems indeed probable, that at the term of years he has already attained, the bowl, to use the pathetic language of Scripture, would have been broken at the fountain ; and little can one, who has enjoyed on the whole an uncommon share of the most inestimable of worldly blessings, be entitled to complain, that life, advancing to its period, should be attended with its usual proportions of shadows and storms. They have affected him at least in no more painful manner than is inseparable from the discharge of this part of the debt of humanity. Of those whose relation to him in the ranks of life might have ensured him their sympathy under indisposition, many are now no more ; and those who may yet follow in his wake, are entitled to expect, in bearing inevitable evils, an example of firmness and patience, more especially on the part of one who has enjoyed no small good fortune during the course of his pilgrimage.

The public have claims on his gratitude, for which the Author of Waverley has no adequate means of expression ; but he may be permitted to hope, that the powers of his mind, such as they are, may not have a different date from those of his body ; and that he may again meet his patronising friends, if not exactly in his old fashion of literature, at least in some branch, which may not call forth the remark, that—

> Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage.[1]

Next morning, the Honourable Captain Henry Duncan, R.N., who was at this time store-keeper of the Ordnance, and who had taken a great deal of trouble in arranging matters for the voyage, called on Sir Walter to introduce to him Captain, now Sir Hugh Pigot, the commanding officer of the Barham. The Diary says—'*October* 19. Captain H. Duncan called with Captain Pigot, a smart-looking gentlemanlike man, who announces his purpose of sailing on Monday. I have made my preparations for being on board on Sunday, which is the day appointed.

'Captain Duncan told me jocularly never to take a naval Captain's word on shore, and quoted Sir William Scott, who used to say waggishly, that there was nothing so accommodating on shore, but when on board, he became a peremptory lion. Henry Duncan has behaved very kindly, and says he only discharges the wishes of his service in making me as easy as possible, which is very handsome—too high a compliment for me.[1] No danger of feud, except about politics, which would be impolitic on my part, and though it bars out one great subject of discussion, it leaves enough besides. Walter arrives ready to sail. So what little remains must be done without loss of time.

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[1] Johnson's Vanity of Human Wishes. See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 132.

'I leave this country uncertain if it has got a total pardon or only a reprieve. I won't think of it, as I can do no good. It seems to be in one of those crises by which Providence reduces nations to their original elements. If I had my health, I should take no worldly fee, not to be in the bustle; but I am as weak as water, and I shall be glad when I have put the Mediterranean between the island and me.

'*October* 23.—Misty morning—looks like a yellow fog, which is the curse of London. I would hardly take my share of it for a share of its wealth and its curiosity—a vile double-distilled fog, of the most intolerable kind. Children scarce stirring yet, but Baby and Macao beginning their Macao notes——'

Dr. Fergusson found Sir Walter with this page of his Diary before him, when he called to pay his farewell visit. 'As he was still working at his MSS.,' says the Doctor, 'I offered to retire, but was not permitted. On my saying I had come to take leave of him before he quitted England, he exclaimed, with much excitement—"England is no longer a place for an honest man. I shall not live to find it so; you may." He then broke out into the details of a very favourite superstition of his, that the middle of every century had always been marked by some great convulsion or calamity in this island. Already the state of politics preyed much on his mind—and indeed that continued to form a part of the delirious dreams of his last illness. On the whole, the alterations which had taken place in his mind and person since I had seen him, three years before, were very apparent. The expression of the countenance and the play of features were changed by slight palsy of one cheek. His utterance was so thick and indistinct as to make it very difficult for any but those accustomed to hear it, to gather his meaning. His gait was less firm and assured than ever; but his power of self-command, his social tact, and his benevolent courtesy, the habits of a life, remained untouched by a malady which had obscured the higher powers of his intellect.'

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[1] The Hon. Captain Duncan, youngest son of Lord Duncan, received the honour of Knighthood in 1834, and died in November 1835, aged 49.

After breakfast, Sir Walter, accompanied by his son and both his daughters, set off for Portsmouth; and Captain Basil Hall had the kindness to precede them by an early coach, and prepare everything for their reception at the hotel. They expected that the embarkation would take place next day, and the Captain had considered that his professional tact and experience might be serviceable, which they were eminently. In changing horses at Guildford, Sir Walter got out of his carriage, and very narrowly escaped being run over by a stage-coach. Of all 'the habits of a life,' none clung longer to him than his extreme repugnance to being helped in anything. It was late before he came to lean, as a matter of course, when walking, upon any one but Tom Purdie; and the reader will see, in the sequel, that this proud feeling, coupled with increasing tendency to abstraction of mind, often exposed him to imminent hazard.

The Barham could not sail for a week. During this interval, Sir Walter scarcely stirred from his hotel, being unwilling to display his infirmities to the crowd of gazers who besieged him whenever he appeared. He received, however, deputations of the literary and scientific societies of the town, and all other visitors, with his usual ease and courtesy: and he might well be gratified with the extraordinary marks of deference paid him by the official persons who could in any way contribute to his ease and comfort. The first Lord of the Admiralty, Sir James

Graham, and the Secretary, Sir John Barrow, both appeared in person, to ascertain that nothing had been neglected for his accommodation on board the frigate. The Admiral, Sir Thomas Foley, placed his barge at his disposal; the Governor, Sir Colin Campbell, and all the chief officers, naval and military, seemed to strive with each other in attention to him and his companions. In Captain Hall's Third Series of Fragments of Voyages and Travels (vol. iii. p. 280) some interesting details have long since been made public. But it may be sufficient to say here, that had Captain Pigot and his gallant shipmates been appointed to convey a Prince of the Blood and his suite, more generous, anxious, and delicate exertions could not have been made, either in altering the interior of the vessel, so as to meet the wants of the passengers, or afterwards, throughout the voyage, in rendering it easy, comfortable, and, as far as might be, interesting and amusing.

I subjoin an extract or two from the Diary at Portsmouth, which show how justly Dr. Fergusson has been describing Sir Walter as in complete possession of all the qualities that endeared him to society:—

'*October* 24.—The girls break loose—mad with the craze of seeing sights—and run the risk of deranging the naval officers, who offer their services with their natural gallantry. I wish they would be moderate in their demands on people's complaisance. They little know how inconvenient are such seizures. A sailor in particular is a bad refuser, and before he can turn three times round, he is bound by a triple knot to all sorts of nonsense.

'*October* 27.—The girls, I regret to see, have got a senseless custom of talking politics in all weathers, and in all sorts of company. This can do no good, and may give much offence. Silence can offend no one, and there are pleasanter or less irritating subjects to talk of. I gave them both a hint of this, and bid them remember they were among ordinary strangers. How little young people reflect what they may win or lose by a smart reflection imprudently fired off at a venture!'

On the morning of the 29th, the wind at last changed, and the Barham got under weigh.

After a few days, when they had passed the Bay of Biscay, Sir Walter ceased to be annoyed with sea-sickness, and sat most of his time on deck, enjoying apparently the air, the scenery, and above all the ship itself, the beautiful discipline practised in all things, and the martial exercises of the men. In Captain Pigot, Lieutenant Walker, the physician Dr. Liddell, and I believe in many others of the officers, he had highly intelligent as well as polished companions. The course was often altered, for the express purpose of giving him a glimpse of some famous place; and it was only the temptation of a singularly propitious breeze that prevented a halt at Algiers.

On the 20th November they came upon that remarkable phenomenon, the sudden creation of a submarine volcano, which bore, during its very brief date, the name of Graham's Island. Four months had elapsed since it 'arose from out the azure main'—and in a few days more it disappeared. 'Already,' as Dr. Davy says, 'its crumbling masses were falling to pieces from the pressure of the hand or foot.'[1] Yet nothing could prevent Sir Walter from landing on it—and in a letter of the following week he thus describes his adventure:—the Barham had reached Malta on the 22nd.

'*To James Skene, Esq. of Rubislaw, Edinburgh.*

'MALTA, *Nov.* 25, 1831.

'MY DEAR SKENE—Our habits of non-correspondence are so firmly established, that it must be a matter of some importance that sets either of us a-writing to the other. As it has been my lot to see the new volcano, called Graham's Island, either employed in establishing itself, or more likely in decomposing itself—and as it must be an object of much curiosity to many of our brethren of the Royal Society, I have taken it into my head that even the very imperfect account which I can give of a matter of this extraordinary kind may be in some degree valued. Not being able to borrow your fingers, those of the Captain's clerk have been put in requisition for the inclosed sketch, and the notes adjoined are as accurate as can be expected from a hurried visit. You have a view of the island, very much as it shows at present; but nothing is more certain than that it is on the eve of a very important change, though in what respect is doubtful. I saw a portion of about five or six feet in height give way under the feet of one of our companions on the very ridge of the southern corner, and become completely annihilated, giving us some anxiety for the fate of our friend, till the dust and confusion of the dispersed pinnacle had subsided. You know my old talents for horsemanship. Finding the earth, or what seemed a substitute for it, sink at every step up to the knee, so as to make walking for an infirm and heavy man nearly impossible, I mounted the shoulders of an able and willing seaman, and by dint of his exertions rode nearly to the top of the island. I would have given a great deal for you, my friend, the frequent and willing supplier of my defects; but on this journey, though undertaken late in life, I have found, from the benevolence of my companions, that when one man's strength was insufficient to supply my deficiencies, I had the willing aid of twenty if it could be useful. I have sent you one of the largest blocks of lava which I could find on the islet, though small pieces are innumerable. We found two dolphins, killed apparently by the hot temperature, and the body of a robin redbreast, which seemingly had come off from the nearest land, and starved to death on the islet, where it had neither found food nor water. Such had been the fate of the first attempt to stock the island with fish and fowl. On the south side, the volcanic principle was still apparently active. The perpetual bubbling up from the bottom produces a quantity of steam, which rises all around the base of the island, and surrounds it as with a cloak when seen from a distance. Most of these appearances struck the other gentlemen, I believe, as well as myself; but a gentleman who has visited the rock repeatedly, is of opinion that it is certainly increasing in magnitude. Its decrease in height may be consistent with the increase of its more level parts, and even its general appearance above water; for the ruins which crumble down from the top, are like to remain at the bottom of the ridge of the rock, add to the general size of the islet, and tend to give the ground firmness.

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[1] Philosophical Transactions, May 1834, p. 552.

'The gales of this new-born island are anything but odoriferous. Brimstone, and such like, are the prevailing savours, to a degree almost suffocating. Every hole dug in the sand is filled with boiling water, or what was nearly such. I cannot help thinking that the great ebullition in the bay is the remains of the original crater, now almost filled up, yet still showing that some extraordinary operations are going on in the subterranean regions.

'If you think, my dear Skene, that any of these trifling particulars concerning this islet can interest our friends, you are free to communicate them either to the Society or to the Club, as you judge most proper. I have just seen James[1] in full health, but he vanished like a guilty thing, when, forgetting that I was a contraband commodity, I went to shake him by the hand, which would have cost him ten days' imprisonment, I being at present in quarantine.

'We saw an instance of the strictness with which this law is observed: In entering the harbour, a seaman was pushed from our yard-arm. He swam strongly, notwithstanding the fall, but the Maltese boats, of whom there were several, tacked from him, to avoid picking him up, and an English boat, which did take the poor man in, was condemned to ten days' imprisonment, to reward the benevolence of the action. It is in the capacity of quarantine prisoners that we now inhabit the decayed chambers of a magnificent old Spanish palace, which resembles the pantaloons of the Don in his youth, a world too wide for his shrunk shanks. But you know Malta, where there is more magnificence than comfort, though we have met already many friends, and much kindness.

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[1] James Henry Skene, Esq., a son of Sir W.'s correspondent, was then a young officer on duty at Malta.

'My best compliments to Mrs. Skene, to whom I am bringing a fairy cup made out of a Nautilus shell—the only one which I found entire on Graham's Island; the original owner had suffered shipwreck.—I beg to be respectfully remembered to all friends of the Club.—Yours ever, with love to your fireside,

'WALTER SCOTT.'

At Malta Sir Walter found several friends of former days, besides young Skene. The Right Honourable John Hookham Frere had been resident there for several years, as he still continues, the captive of the enchanting climate, and the romantic monuments of the old chivalry.[1] Sir John Stoddart, the Chief Judge of the island, had known the Poet ever since the early days of Lasswade and Glenfinlas; and the Lieutenant-Governor, Colonel Seymour Bathurst, had often met him under the roof of his father, the late Earl Bathurst. Mrs. Bathurst's distinguished uncle, Sir William Alexander, some time Lord Chief-Baron of England, happened also to be then visiting her. Captain Dawson, husband to Lord Kinnedder's eldest daughter, was of the garrison, and Sir Walter felt as if he were about to meet a daughter of his own in the Euphemia Erskine who had so often sat upon his knee. She immediately joined him and insisted on being allowed to partake his quarantine. Lastly, Dr. John Davy, the brother of his illustrious friend, was at the head of the medical staff; and this gentleman's presence was welcome indeed to the Major and Miss Scott, as well as to their father, for he had already begun to be more negligent as to his diet, and they dreaded his removal from the skilful watch of Dr. Liddell. Various letters, and Sir Walter's Diary (though hardly legible), show that he inspected with curiosity the knightly antiquities of La Valetta, the church and monuments of St. John, the deserted palaces and libraries of the heroic brotherhood; and the reader will find that, when he imprudently resumed the pen of romance, the subject he selected was from their annals. He enjoyed also the society of the accomplished persons I have been naming, and the marks of honour lavished on him by the inhabitants, both native and English.

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[1] See the charming 'Epistle in Rhyme, from William Stewart Rose at Brighton, to John Hookham Frere at Malta,' published with some other pieces in 1835.

Here he saw much of a Scotch lady, with many of whose friends and connexions he had been intimate—Mrs. John Davy, the daughter of a brother advocate, the late Mr. Archibald Fletcher, whose residence in Edinburgh used to be in North Castle Street, within a few doors of 'poor 39.' This lady has been so good as to entrust me with a few pages of her 'Family Journal'; and I am sure the reader will value a copy of them more than anything else I could produce with respect to Sir Walter's brief residence at Malta:—

'Before the end of November,' says Mrs. Davy, 'a great sensation was produced in Malta, as well it might, by the arrival of Sir Walter Scott. He came here in the Barham, a frigate considered the very beauty of the fleet—"a perfect ship," as Sir Pulteney Malcolm used to say, and in the highest discipline. In her annals it may now be told that she carried the most gifted, certainly the most popular author of Europe into the Mediterranean; but it was amusing to see that the officers of the ship thought the great minstrel and romancer must gain more addition to his fame from having been a passenger on board the Barham, than they or *she* could possibly receive even from having taken on board such a guest. Our Governor, Sir F. Ponsonby, had not returned from a visit to England when this arrival took place, but orders had been received that all manner of attention should be paid; that a house, carriage, horses, etc., should be placed at Sir Walter's disposal; and all who thought they had the smallest right to come forward on the occasion, or even a decent pretence for doing so, were eager to do him honour according to their notions and means.

'On account of cholera then prevailing in England, a quarantine was at this time enforced here on all who came from thence; but instead of driving Sir Walter to the ordinary lazaretto, some good apartments were prepared at Fort Manuel for him and his family to occupy for the appointed time, I believe nine days. He there held a daily levee to receive the numerous visitors who waited on him; and I well remember, on accompanying Colonel and Mrs. Bathurst and Sir William Alexander to pay their first visit, how the sombre landing-place of the Marsa Muscet (the quarantine harbour), under the heavy bastion that shelters it on the Valetta side, gave even then tokens of an illustrious arrival, in the unusual number of boats and bustle of parties setting forth to or returning from Fort Manuel, on the great business of the day. But even in the case of one whom all "delighted to honour," a quarantine visit is a notably uncomfortable thing; and when our little procession had marched up several broad flights of steps, and we found ourselves on a landing-place having a wide door-way opposite to us, in which sat Sir Walter—his daughter, Major Scott, and Mrs. Dawson standing behind—and a stout bar placed across some feet in front of them, to keep us at the legal distance—I could not but repent having gone to take part in a ceremony so formal and wearisome to all concerned. Sir Walter rose, but seemed to do it with difficulty, and the paralytic fixed look of his face was most distressing. We all walked up to the bar, but there stood very like culprits, and no one seemed to know who was to speak first. Sir W. Alexander, however, accustomed of old to discourse from the bar, or charge from the bench, was beyond question the proper person—so, after a very little hesitation, he began and made a neat speech, expressing our hopes that Sir Walter would sojourn at Malta as long as possible. Sir Walter replied very simply and courteously in his natural manner, but his articulation was manifestly affected, though not I think quite so much so as his expression of face. He wore trousers of the Lowland small-checked plaid, and sitting with his hands crossed over the top of a shepherd's looking staff, he was very like the picture painted by Leslie, and engraved for one of the Annuals,—but when he spoke, the varied expression, that used quite to redeem all heaviness of features, was no longer to be seen. Our visit was short, and we left Mr. Frere with him at the bar on our departure. He came daily to see his friend, and passed more of his quarantine-time with him than any one else. We were told that between Mr. Frere's habitual absence of mind, and Sir Walter's natural Scotch desire to shake hands with him at every meeting, it required all the vigilance of the attendant genii of the place to prevent Mr. F. from being put into quarantine along with him.

'Sir Walter did not accept the house provided for him by the Governor's order, nor any of the various private houses which, to Miss Scott's great amusement, were urgently proffered for his use by their owners—but established himself, during his stay, at Beverley's Hotel, in Strada Ponente. Our house was immediately opposite to this one, divided by a very narrow street; and I well remember, when watching his arrival on the day he took Pratique, hearing the sound of his voice as he chatted sociably to Mr. Greig (the inspector of quarantine), on whose arm he leaned while walking from the carriage to the door of his hotel—it seemed to me that I had hardly heard so home-like a sound in this strange land, or one that so took me back to Edinburgh and our own North Castle Street, where, in passing him as he walked up or down with a friend, I had heard it before so often. Nobody was at hand at the moment for me to show him to but an English maid, who not having my Scotch interest in the matter, only said, when I tried to enlighten her as to the event of his arrival—"Poor old gentleman, how ill he looks." It showed how sadly a little while must have changed him; for when I had seen him last in Edinburgh, perhaps five or six years before, no one would have thought of calling him "an old gentleman." At one or two dinner-parties, at which we saw him within the week of his arrival, he did not seem at all animated in conversation, and retired soon; for he seemed resolutely prudent as to keeping early hours; though he was unfortunately careless as to what he ate or drank, especially the latter—and, I fear, obstinate when his daughter attempted to regulate his diet.

'A few days after his arrival in Malta, he accepted an invitation from the garrison to a *ball*—an odd kind of honour to bestow on a man of letters suffering from paralytic illness, but extremely characteristic of the taste of this place. It was, I believe, well got up, under the direction of the usual master of Malta ceremonies, Mr. Walker, an officer of artillery; and everything was done that the said officer and his colleagues could do to give it a sentimental, if not a literary cast. The decorations were laboriously appropriate. Sir Walter entered (having been received at the door by a deputation of the dignitaries of the island) to the sound of Scotch music; and as it was held in the great room of the Auberge de Provence, formerly one of the festal halls of the Knights of Malta, it was not a bad scene—if such a gaiety was to be inflicted at all.

'A day or two afterwards, we gladly accepted an invitation brought to us by Miss Scott, to dine quietly with him and two or three officers of the Barham at his hotel; and I thought the day of this dining so *white* a one as to mark it especially in a little notebook the same evening. I see it stands dated December the 4th, and the little book says—"Dined and spent the evening of this day with Sir Walter Scott." We had only met him before at large dinner-parties. At home he was very much more happy and more inclined to talk. Even now his conversation has many characteristics of his writings. There is the same rich felicitous quotation from favourite writers,—the same happy introduction of old traditionary stories—Scotch ones especially—in a manner as easy, and evidently quite unprepared. The coming in of a young midshipman, a cousin of his (Scott by name), to join the party, gave occasion to his telling the story of "Muckle-

Mouthed Meg,"[1] and to his describing the tragi-comical picture drawn from that story by Mr. C. K. Sharpe, which I remembered to have seen at Abbotsford. At dinner he spoke a good deal of Tom Sheridan, after telling a *bon-mot* of his in illustration of something that was said; and seemed amused at a saying of Mr. Smyth (of Cambridge), respecting that witty and volatile pupil of his,—"that it was impossible to put knowledge into him, try it as you might."—"Just," said Sir Walter, "like a trunk that you are trying to over-pack, but it won't do—the things start out in your face." On joining us in the drawing-room after dinner, Sir Walter was very animated, spoke much of Mr. Frere, and of his remarkable success, when quite a boy, in the translation of a Saxon ballad.[2] This led him to ballads in general, and he gravely lamented his friend Mr. Frere's heresy in not esteeming highly enough that of "Hardyknute." He admitted that it was not a veritable old ballad, but "just old enough," and a noble imitation of the best style. In speaking of Mr. Frere's translations, he repeated a pretty long passage from his version of one of the Romances of the Cid (published in the Appendix to Southey's quarto), and seemed to enjoy a spirited charge of the knights therein described, as much as he could have done in his best days, placing his walking-stick in rest like a lance, to "suit the action to the word." Miss Scott says she has not seen him so animated, so like himself, since he came to Malta, as on this evening.

'*Sunday Morning, December* 5 (as my said little note-book proceeds to record)—Sir Walter spent chiefly in St. John's Church, the beautiful temple and burying-place of the knights, and there he was much pleased and interested. On Monday the 6th, he dined at the Chief-Justice, Sir John Stoddart's, when I believe he partook too freely of porter and champaign for one in his invalid state. On Tuesday morning (the 7th), on looking from one of our windows across the street, I observed him sitting in an easy-chair in the parlour of his hotel, a book in his hand, and apparently reading attentively :—his window was wide open, and I remember wishing much for the power of making a picture of him just as he sat. But about eleven o'clock Miss Scott come over to me, looking much frightened, and saying that she feared he was about to have another paralytic attack. He had, she said, been rather confused in mind the day before, and the dinner-party had been too much for him. She had observed that on trying to answer a note from the Admiral that morning he had not been able to form a letter on the paper, and she thought he was now sitting in a sort of stupor. She begged that Dr. Davy would visit him as soon as possible, and that I would accompany him, so that he might not suppose it a *medical* visit, for to all such he had an utter objection. I sent for Dr. D. instantly, and the moment he returned we went together to the hotel. We found Sir Walter sitting near a fire, dressed, as I had seen him just before, in a large silk dressing-gown, his face a good deal flushed, and his eyes heavy. He rose, however, as I went up to him, and, addressing me by my mother's name, "Mrs. Fletcher," asked kindly whether I was quite recovered from a little illness I had complained of the day before, and then walked to a table on the other side of the room, to look at some views of the new Volcano in the Mediterranean, which, by way of apology for our early visit, we had carried with us. With these he seemed pleased ; but there was great indistinctness in his manner of speaking. He soon after sat down, and began, of his own accord, to converse with Dr. Davy on the work he was then engaged in—the Life of Sir Humphrey—saying that he was truly glad he was thus engaged, as he did not think justice had been done to the character of his friend by Dr. Paris. In speaking of the scientific distinction attained by Sir Humphrey, he said—"I hope, Dr. Davy, your mother lived to see it. There must have been such great pleasure in that to her." We both remember with much interest this kindly little observation; and it was but one of many that dropped from him as naturally at the different times we met, showing that, "fallen" as the "mighty" was, and "his weapons of war perished," the springs of fancy dried up, and memory on most subjects much impaired, his sense of the value of home-bred worth and affection was in full force. His way of mentioning "my son Charles, poor fellow," whom he was longing to meet at Naples—or "my own Tweedside," which in truth he seemed to lament ever having quitted—was often really affecting. Our visit together on this morning was of course short, but Dr. Davy saw him repeatedly in the course of the same day. Leeches were applied to his head, and though they did not give immediate relief to his uncomfortable sensations, he was evidently much better next morning, and disposed to try a drive into the country. Some lameness having befallen one of the horses provided for his use, I, at his request, ordered a little open carriage of ours to the door about twelve o'clock, and prepared to accompany him to St. Antonio, a garden residence of the Governor's, about two miles from Valetta, then occupied by Mr. Frere, whose own house at the Pietà was under repair. It was not without fear and trembling I undertook this little drive—not on account of the greatness of my companion, for assuredly he was the most humane of lions, but I feared he might have some new seizure of illness, and that I should be very helpless to him in such a case. I proposed that Dr. D. should go instead; but, like most men when they are ill or unhappy, he preferred having *womankind* about him,—said he would "like *Mrs.* Davy better"; so I went. The notices of his "carriage talk" I give exactly as I find them noted down the day after—omitting only the story of Sir H. Davy and the Tyrolese rifle, which I put on record separately for my husband, for insertion in his book.[1]

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[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 305.

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 382.

'My little note-book of December 9 says—The day was very beautiful—(like a good English day about the end of May)—and the whole way in going to St. Antonio he was cheerful, and inclined to talk on any matter that was suggested. He admired the streets of Valetta much as we passed through them, noticing particularly the rich effect of the carved stone balconies, and the images of saints at every corner, saying several times, "This town is really quite like a dream." Something (suggested, I believe, by the appearances of Romish superstition on all sides of us) brought him to speak of the Irish—of whose native character he expressed a high opinion; and spoke most feelingly of the evil fate that seemed constantly to attend them. Some link from this subject—(I do not exactly know what—for the rattling progress of our little vehicle over ill-paved ways, and his imperfect utterance together, made it difficult to catch all his words)—brought to his recollection a few fine lines from "O'Connor's Child," in the passage—

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[1] See Dr. Davy's Memoirs of his brother, vol. i. p. 506,—for the account of Speckbacker's rifle, now in the Armoury at Abbotsford.

> And ranged, as to the judgment seat,
> My guilty, trembling brothers round,—

which he repeated with his accustomed energy, and then went on to speak of Campbell, whom, as a poet, he honours. On my saying something of Campbell's youth at the publication of his first poem, he said —"Ay, he was very young—but he came out at once, ye may say, like the Irish rebels, a hundred thousand strong."

'There was no possibility of admiring the face of the country as we drove along after getting clear of the city gates; but I was pleased to see how refreshing the air seemed to Sir Walter—and perhaps this made him go back, as he did, to his days of long walks, over moss and moor, which he told me he had often traversed at the rate of five-and-twenty miles a day, with a gun on his shoulder. He snuffed with great delight the perfume of the new oranges, which hung thickly on each side as we drove up the long avenue to the court-yard, or stable-yard rather, of St. Antonio—and was amused at the Maltese untidiness of two or three pigs running at large under the trees. "That's just like my friend Frere," he said—"quite content to let pigs run about in his orange-groves." We did not find Mr. Frere at home, and therefore drove back without waiting. Among some other talk, in returning, he spoke with praise of Miss Ferrier as a novelist, and then with still higher praise of Miss Austen. Of the latter he said—"I find myself every now and then with one of her books in my hand. There's a finishing-off in some of her scenes that is really quite above everybody else. And there's that Irish lady, too—but I forget everybody's name now"——"Miss Edgeworth," I said—"Ay, Miss Edgeworth—she's *very* clever, and best in the little touches too. I'm sure, in that children's story"—(he meant "Simple Susan")—"where the little girl parts with her lamb, and the little boy brings it back to her again, there's nothing for it but just to put down the book, and cry."—A little afterwards, he said—"Do you know Moore?—he's a charming fellow—a perfect gentleman in society;—to use a sporting phrase, there's no kick in his gallop."

'As we drew near home, I thought him somewhat fatigued—he was more confused than at first in his recollection of names—and we drove on without saying anything. But I shall not forget the kindly good-humour with which he said, in getting out at his hotel door—"Thank ye, for your kindness—your charity, I may say—to an old lame man—farewell!" He did not seem the worse of this little exertion this day; but, thenceforward, was prudent in refusing all dinner invitations.

'On Friday (December 10th) he went, in company with Mr. Frere, to see Citta Vecchia. I drove over with a lady friend to meet them at the church there. Sir Walter seemed pleased with what was shown him, but was not animated.—On Saturday the 11th, he drove out twice to see various things in Valetta.—On Monday morning the 13th, I saw him for the last time, when I called to take leave of Miss Scott. Dr. Davy accompanied him, in the course of the following morning, to see Strada Stretta—the part of the city in which he had been told the young Knights of Malta used to fight their duels, when such affairs occurred. In quitting the street, Sir Walter looked round him earnestly, and said—“It will be hard if I cannot make something of this.” On that day, Tuesday morning, December 14th, he and his party went again on board the Barham, and sailed for Naples.’

CHAPTER LXXXII

Residence at Naples—Excursions to Pæstum, Pompeii, etc.—Last Attempts in Romance—Sir William Gell's Memoranda.

DEC. 1831—APRIL 1832

ON the 17th of December, the Barham reached Naples, and Sir Walter found his son Charles ready to receive him. The quarantine was cut short by the courtesy of the King of Naples, and the travellers established themselves in an apartment of the Palazzo Caramanico.

Here again the British Minister, Mr. Hill (now Lord Berwick), and the English nobility and gentry then residing in Naples, did whatever kindness and respect could suggest for Sir Walter; nor were the natives, and their visitants from foreign countries, less attentive. The Marquis of Hertford, the Hon. Keppel Craven, the Hon. William Ashley and his Lady, Sir George Talbot, the venerable Matthias (author of 'The Pursuits of Literature'), Mr. Auldjo (celebrated for his ascent of Mont Blanc), and Dr. Hogg, a medical gentleman, who has since published an account of his travels in the East—appear to have, in their various ways, contributed whatever they could to his comfort and amusement. But the person of whom he saw most was the late Sir William Gell, who had long been condemned to live in Italy by ailments and infirmities not dissimilar to his own.[1] Sir William, shortly after Sir Walter's death, drew up a memoir of their intercourse, which will, I believe, be considered as sufficient for this period.

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[1] Sir William Gell died at Naples in February 1836, aged 59.

Before I introduce it, however, I may notice that Sir Walter, whenever he appeared at the Neapolitan Court, which he did several times, wore the uniform of a brigadier-general in the ancient Body-Guard of Scotland—a dress of light green, with gold embroidery, assigned to those *Archers* by George IV. at the termination of his northern progress in 1822. I have observed this circumstance alluded to with a sort of sneer. The truth is, Sir Walter had ordered the dress for the christening of the young Buccleuch ; but at any rate, the machinery now attached to his lame limb would have made it impossible for him to appear in breeches and stockings, as was then imperative on civilians.

Further, it was on the 16th of January that Sir Walter received the intelligence of his grandson's death. His Diary of that date has simply these words :—'Poor Johnny Lockhart! This boy is gone, whom we have made so much of. I could not have borne it better than I now do, and I might have borne it much worse.—I went to the Opera in the evening to see this amusement in its birth-place, which is now so widely received over Europe.'

At first Sir Walter busied himself chiefly about forming a collection of Neapolitan and Sicilian ballads and broadsides ; and Mr. Matthias seems to have been at much pains in helping this. But alas ! ere he had been long in Naples, he began, in spite of all remonstrances, to give several hours every morning to the composition of a new novel, 'The Siege of Malta' ; and during his stay he nearly finished both this and a shorter tale, entitled 'BIZARRO.' He also relaxed more and more in his obedience to the regimen of his physicians, and thus applied a twofold stimulus to his malady.

Neither of these novels will ever, I hope, see the light ; but I venture to give the foundation of the shorter one, as nearly as I can decipher it from the author's Diary, of which it occupies some of the last pages.

‘DEATH OF IL BIZARRO

‘This man was called, from his wily but inexorable temper, Il Bizarro. He was captain of a gang of banditti, whom he governed by his own authority, till he increased them to 1000 men, both on foot and horseback, whom he maintained in the mountains of Calabria, between the French and Neapolitans, both of which he defied, and pillaged the country. High rewards were set upon his head, to very little purpose, as he took care to guard himself against being betrayed by his own gang, the common fate of those banditti who become great in their vocation. At length a French colonel, whose name I have forgot, occupied the country of Bizarro, with such success, that he formed a cordon around him and his party, and included him between the folds of a military column. Well-nigh driven to submit himself, the robber with his wife, a very handsome woman, and a child of a few months old, took post one day beneath an old bridge, and by an escape almost miraculous, were not perceived by a strong party whom the French maintained on the top of the arch. Night at length came without a discovery, which every moment might have made. When it became quite dark, the brigand, enjoining the strictest silence on the female and child, resolved to start from his place of shelter, and as he issued forth, kept his hand on the child's throat. But as, when they began to move, the child naturally cried, its father in a rage tightened his gripe so relentlessly, that the poor infant never offended more in the same manner.

‘His wife had never been very fond of him, though he trusted her more than any who approached him. She had been originally the wife of another man, murdered by her second husband, which second marriage she was compelled to undergo, and to affect at least the conduct of an affectionate wife. In their wanderings she alone knew where he slept. He left his men in a body upon the top of an hill, round which they set watches. He then went apart into the woods with his wife, and having chosen a lair in an obscure and deep thicket, there took up his residence for the night. A large Calabrian dog, his constant attendant, was then tied to a tree at some distance to secure his slumbers, and having placed his carabine within reach of his arm, he consigned himself to such sleep as belongs to his calling. By such precautions he had secured his rest for many years.

'But after the death of the child, the measure of his offence towards the unhappy mother was full to the brim, and her thoughts became determined on revenge. One evening he took up his quarters with the usual precautions, but without the usual success. He had laid his carabine near him, and betaken himself to rest, when his partner arose from his side, and ere he became sensible that she had done so, she seized his carabine, and discharging it in his bosom, ended at once his life and his crimes. She finished her work by cutting off the brigand's head, and carrying it to the principal town of the province, where she delivered it to the police, and claimed the reward attached to his head, which was paid accordingly. This female still lives, a stately, dangerous-looking woman, yet scarce ill thought of, considering the provocation.

'The dog struggled extremely to get loose on hearing the shot. Some say the female shot it; others that, in its rage, it very nearly gnawed through the stout young tree to which it was tied. He was worthy of a better master.

'The distant encampment of the band was disturbed by the firing of the Bizarro's carabine at midnight. They ran through the woods to seek the captain, but finding him lifeless and headless, they became so much surprised, that many of them surrendered to the government, and relinquished their trade. Thus the band of the Bizarro, as it lived by his spirit, was broken up by his death.

'Among other stories respecting the cruelty of this bandit, I heard this. A French officer, who had been active in the pursuit of him, fell into his hands, and was made to die the death of Saint Polycarp—that is, the period being the middle of summer, he was flayed alive, and, being smeared with honey, was exposed to all the intolerable insects of a southern sky. The corps were also informed where they might find their officer if they thought proper to send for him. As more than two days elapsed before the wretched man was found, nothing save miserable relics were discovered. I do not warrant these stories, but such are told currently.'

Here is another—taken, I believe, from one of the rude pamphlets in his collection :—

'There was a farmer of an easy fortune, and who might be supposed to leave to his daughter, a very pretty girl, and an only child, a fortune thought in the village to be very considerable. She was, under the hope of sharing such a prize, made up to by a young man in the neighbourhood, handsome, active, and of good character. He was of that sort of persons who are generally successful among women, and this girl was supposed to have encouraged his addresses ; but her father, on being applied to, gave him a direct and positive refusal. The gallant resolved to continue his addresses in hopes of overcoming the obstacle by his perseverance, but the father's opposition seemed only to increase by the lover's pertinacity. At length, as the farmer walked one evening, smoking his pipe, upon the terrace before his door, the lover unhappily passed by, and, struck with the instant thought that the obstacle to the happiness of his life was now entirely in his own power, he rushed upon the father, pierced him with three mortal stabs of his knife, and made his escape to the mountains.

'What was most remarkable was, that he was protected against the police, who went, as was their duty, in quest of him, by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who afforded him both shelter and such food as he required, looking on him less as a wilful criminal than an unfortunate man, who had been surprised by a strong and almost irresistible temptation ; so congenial at this moment is the love of vengeance to an Italian bosom—and, though chastised in general by severe punishment, so much are criminals sympathized with by the community.'

I now insert the Neapolitan part of Sir William Gell's Memoranda.

'Every record of the latter days of those who, by their actions or their talents, have excited the admiration and occupied the attention of their contemporaries, has been thought worthy of preservation, and I feel, on that account, a melancholy pleasure in complying with the request that I would furnish such anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott as my short intimacy with that illustrious personage may have afforded. The reason assigned in the letter which I received from one of the family on the subject, was, that I was his "latest friend"; and this appeared to me as strong a motive as if I could have been called his earliest acquaintance.

'I had met Sir Walter at Stanmore Priory many years ago, when on a visit to the late Marquis of Abercorn, where he read one of the earliest of his poetical productions; but I had no farther personal communication with him till his arrival at Naples. I was induced to call on him at the Palazzo Caramanico, at the desire of a mutual friend, on the 5th of January 1832; and it is probable that our mutual infirmities, which made us suitable companions in excursions, contributed in a great degree to the intimacy which immediately took place between us. On the following evening I presented to him Mr. Keppel Craven, whose Tour in the South of Italy he had just read with pleasure. From this time I was constantly in the habit of receiving, or calling for Sir Walter in the morning, and usually accompanied him to see any of the remarkable objects in the neighbourhood of Naples. The Lago d'Agnano was among the first places visited, and he was evidently quite delighted with the tranquil beauty of the spot, and struck particularly by the sight of the leaves yet lingering on the trees at so advanced a period of the winter, and the appearance of summer yet maintained by the meadows and copses surrounding the lake. It quickly recalled to his mind a lake in Scotland, which he immediately began to describe. I afterwards found that his only pleasure in seeing new places arose from the poetical ideas they inspired, as applicable to other scenes with which his mind was more familiar.

'Mr. Craven accompanied us on horseback in this excursion;—and Sir Walter learning that he was writing a second volume, giving an account of a journey in the Abruzzi, kindly observed, that he thought he could be of use to him in the publication of it, adding—"I think I may, perhaps, be able to give his pancake a toss."

'On the 10th of January, I accompanied him to Pozzuoli, and the late Mr. Laing Meason was of the party. Here we succeeded in getting Sir Walter placed upon a heap of ruins, whence he might see the remains of the Thermæ, commonly called the Temple of Serapis. His observation was, that we might tell him anything, and he would believe at all, for many of his friends, and particularly Mr. Morritt, had frequently tried to drive classical antiquities, as they were called, into his head, but they had always found his "skull too thick."

'It was with great risk that he could be brought to any point of difficult access; for though he was so lame, and saw how easily I arrived by submitting to be assisted or carried, it was generally impossible to persuade him to commit himself to the care of the attendants.

'When Sir Walter was presented at Court, the King received him with marked attention, and insisted on his being seated, on account of his infirmity. They both spoke, and the bystanders observed that His Majesty mentioned the pleasure he had received from reading the works of his visitor. Sir Walter answered in French, but not in a clear tone of voice; and he afterwards observed that he and the King parted mutually pleased with the interview, considering that neither had heard one word of what was uttered by the other.

'On the 17th of January I took Sir Walter to dine with the venerable Archbishop of Tarentum, a prelate in his ninetieth year, but yet retaining his faculties unimpaired, and the warmer feelings of youth, with well-known hospitality. The two elders seemed mutually pleased with the interview, but the difficulties of language were opposed to any very agreeable conversation.

'On the 26th of January I attended Sir Walter in a boat, with several friends, to the ruins of a Roman villa, supposed by Mr. Hamilton and others to have been that of Pollio, and situated upon a rock in the sea at the extremity of the promontory of Posilipo. It was by no means the recollection of Pollio that induced Sir Walter to make this excursion. A story existed that out of an opening in the floor of one of the rooms in this villa a spectre robed in white occasionally appeared,—whence the place had acquired the name of La Casa degli Spiriti, and none had presumed to inhabit it. The fact was, that a third story had been built upon the Roman ruins, and this being only inhabited by paupers, had fallen into decay, so as to endanger one angle of the fabric—and the police, for fear of accident, had ordered that it should remain untenanted. The house is situated upon a rock projecting into the sea, but attached on one side to the mainland. An entrance for a boat has been left in the basement story, and it is probable that a sort of open court, into which the sea enters at the back of the house, and in which is the staircase, was constructed for the purpose of cooling the apartments in the heat of summer, by means of the perpetual heaving and sinking of the ocean which takes place even in the calmest weather. The staircase was too much ruined for Sir Walter to ascend with safety, but he appeared satisfied with what he saw, and took some interest in the proofs which the appearance of the opus reticulatum, high up in the external walls, afforded of the antiquity of the place.[1]

'On the 9th of February, Sir Walter went to Pompeii, where, with several ladies and gentlemen at that time resident in Naples, I accompanied him. I did not go in the same carriage, but arriving at the street of the Tombs, found him already almost tired before he had advanced a hundred yards. With great difficulty I forced him to accept the chair in which I was carried, supplying its place with another for myself, tied together with cords and handkerchiefs. He thus was enabled to pass through the city without more fatigue, and I was sometimes enabled to call his attention to such objects as were the most worthy of remark. To these observations, however, he seemed generally nearly insensible, viewing the whole and not the parts, with the eye, not of an antiquary, but a poet, and exclaiming frequently—"The City of the Dead," without any other remark. An excavation had been ordered for him, but it produced nothing more than a few bells, hinges, and other objects of brass, which are found every day. Sir Walter seemed to view, however, the splendid mosaic, representing a combat of the Greeks and Persians, with more interest, and, seated upon a table whence he could look down upon it, he remained some time to examine it. We dined at a large table spread in the Forum, and Sir Walter was cheerful and pleased. In the evening he was a little tired, but felt no bad effects from the excursion to the City of the Dead.

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[1] There is an interesting Essay on this Roman Villa, by Mr. Hamilton, in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature for 1837.

'In our morning drives, Sir Walter always noticed a favourite dog of mine, which was usually in the carriage, and generally patted the animal's head for some time, saying—"poor boy—poor boy." "I have got at home," said he, "two very fine favourite dogs, so large that I am always afraid they look too handsome and too feudal for my diminished income. I am very fond of them, but they are so large it was impossible to take them with me." My dog was in the habit of howling when loud music was performing, and Sir Walter laughed till his eyes were full of tears, at the idea of the dog singing "My Mother bids me bind my hair," by the tune of which the animal seemed most excited, and which the kind-hearted baronet sometimes asked to have repeated.

'I do not remember on what day, during his residence at Naples, he came one morning rather early to my house, to tell me he was sure I should be pleased at some good luck which had befallen him, and of which he had just received notice. This was, as he said, an account from his friends in England, that his last works, Robert of Paris and Castle Dangerous, had gone on to a second edition. He told me in the carriage that he felt quite relieved by his letters; "for," said he, "I could have never slept straight in my coffin till I had satisfied every claim against me." "And now," added he to the dog, "my poor boy, I shall have my house, and my estate round it, free, and I may keep my dogs as big and as many as I choose, without fear of reproach."

'I do not recollect the date of a certain morning's drive, on which he first communicated to me that he had already written, or at least advanced far in a romance, on the subject of Malta, a part of which, he said, laughingly, he had put into the fire by mistake for other papers, but which he thought he had re-written better than before. He asked me about the island of Rhodes, and told me, that, being relieved from debt, and no longer forced to write for money, he longed to turn to poetry again, and to see whether in his old age he was not capable of equalling the rhymes of his youthful days. I encouraged him in this project, and asked why he had ever relinquished poetry. "Because Byron *bet* me," said he, pronouncing the word *beat* short.[1] I rejoined, that I thought I could remember by heart about as many passages of his poetry as of Lord Byron's; and to this he replied—"That may be, but he *bet* me out of the field in the description of the strong passions, and in deep-seated knowledge of the human heart; so I gave up poetry for the time." He became from that moment extremely curious about Rhodes, and having chosen for his poetical subject the chivalrous story of the slaying of the dragon by De Gozon, and the stratagems and valour with which he conceived and executed his purpose, he was quite delighted to hear that

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[1] The common Scotch pronunciation is not unlike what Sir W. G. gives.

I had seen the skeleton of this real or reported dragon, which yet remains secured by large iron staples to the vaulted roof of one of the gates of the city.

'Rhodes became at this time an object of great importance and curiosity to him, and as he had indulged in the idea of visiting it, he was somewhat displeased to learn how very far distant it lay from Corfu, where he had proposed to pass some time with Sir Frederick Adam, then Lord High Commissioner in the Ionian Islands.

'I must not omit stating, that at an early period of his visit to Naples, an old English manuscript of the Romance of Sir Bevis of Hampton, existing in the Royal library, had attracted his attention, and he had resolved on procuring a copy of it—not, I think, for himself, but for a friend in Scotland, who was already possessed of another edition. When Sir Walter visited the library at the Museum, the literati of Naples crowded round him to catch a sight of so celebrated a person, and they showed him every mark of attention in their power, by creating him Honorary Member of their learned societies. Complimentary speeches were addressed to him in Latin, of which, unfortunately, he did not comprehend one word, on account of the difference of pronunciation, but from the confession of which he was saved by the intervention of Mr. Keppel Craven, who attended him. The King of Naples, learning his wish to copy the book, ordered it to be sent to his house, and he employed a person of the name of Sticchini, who, without understanding a word of English, copied the whole in a character as nearly as possible the facsimile of the original. Sticchini was surprised and charmed with Sir Walter's kindness and urbanity, for he generally called him to breakfast, and sometimes to dinner, and treated him on all occasions in the most condescending manner. The Secretary was not less surprised than alarmed on seeing his patron not unfrequently trip his foot against a chair and fall down upon the floor, for he was extremely incautious as to where or how he walked. On these occasions, while the frightened Sticchini ran to assist him, Sir Walter laughed very good-humouredly, refused all help, and only expressed his anxiety lest his spectacles should have been broken by the accident.[1] Sir Walter wished, during his stay at Naples, to procure several Italian books in his particular department of study. Among other curiosities, he thought he had traced Mother Goose, if not to her origin at Naples, at least to a remote period of antiquity in Italy. He succeeded in purchasing a considerable number of books in addition to his library, and took the fancy to have them all bound in vellum.

'Sir Walter had heard too much of Pæstum to quit Naples without seeing it, and we accordingly formed a party in two carriages to go there, intending to sleep at La Cava, at the villa of my much respected friend Miss Whyte ;—a lady not less esteemed for every good quality, than celebrated for the extraordinary exertions of benevolence on the occasion of the murder of the Hunt family at Pæstum. Hearing of this fatal affair, and being nearer than any other of her compatriots to the scene, this lady immediately endeavoured to engage a surgeon at La Cava to accompany her to the spot. No one, however, could be found to venture into the den of the murderers, so that she resolved to go alone, well provided with lint, medicines, and all that could be useful to the wounded persons. She arrived, however, too late to be of use ; but Sir Walter expressed the greatest desire to make the acquaintance of so admirable a person, and it was settled that her hospitable villa should receive and lodge us on our way to Pæstum. La Cava is 25 miles from Naples, and as it was necessary to feed the horses, I was in hopes of showing Sir Walter the amphitheatre of Pompeii while they ate their corn. The day, however, being rainy, we gave up the amphitheatre, and halted at the little tavern immediately below Pompeii. Here being obliged to remain, it was thought advisable to eat, and I had an opportunity of witnessing the hospitality which I had always heard distinguished Sir Walter, for, after we had finished, not only the servants were fed with the provisions he had brought, but the whole remainder was distributed to the poor people who had been driven into the tavern by the rain. This liberality unfortunately occasioned a deficit on the following day, when the party started without provision for the solitudes of Pæstum.

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[1] The spectacles were valued as the gift of a friend and brother poet. See *ante*, p. 202.

'Near Nocera I pointed out a tower situated upon a high mountain, and guarding a pass by which a very steep and zigzag road leads toward Amalfi. I observed, that it was possible that if the Saracens were ever really seated at Nocera dei Pagani, this tower might have been at the confines of the Amalfitan Republic, and have been their frontier against the Mahometans. It was surprising how quickly he caught at any romantic circumstance, and I found, in a very short time, he had converted the Torre di Ciunse, or Chiunse, into a feudal residence, and already peopled it with a Christian host. He called it the Knight's Castle, as long as it remained in sight, and soon after transferred its interest to the curious little towers, used for pigeon-shooting, which abound in the neighbourhood, though they were on the other side of the road.

'From La Cava, the party proceeded the next day to Pæstum, setting out early in the morning; but I did not accompany Sir Walter on that journey, and consequently only know that, by good luck, he found eggs and other rustic fare near the Temples, and returned, after a drive of fifty-four miles, very much fatigued, to a late dinner. He was, however, completely restored by the night's rest, and we visited on the following day the splendid Benedictine Monastery of La Trinità della Cava, situated about three miles from the great road, and approached through a beautiful forest of chestnuts, spreading over most picturesque mountains. The day was fine, and Sir Walter really enjoyed the drive; and the scenery recalled to his mind something of the kind which he had seen in Scotland, on which he repeated the whole of the ballad of *Jock of Hazeldean* with great emphasis, and in a clear voice. At the Convent we had taken care to request that what is termed a Pontifical Mass should be sung in his presence; after which he was taken with much difficulty, and twice falling, through the long and slippery labyrinths of that vast edifice, and up several very tedious staircases to the apartments containing the archives. Here the curious MSS. of the Convent were placed before him, and he seemed delighted with an ancient document in which the names of Saracens as well as Christians appear either as witnesses or principals; but he was chiefly struck with a book containing pictures of the Lombard Kings, of which, through the kindness of Dr. Hogg, he afterwards possessed copies by a young Neapolitan painter who had chanced to be on the spot. On the whole, Sir Walter was more pleased with the Monastery of La Cava than with any place to which I had the honour to accompany him in Italy: the site, the woods, the organ, the size of the Convent, and, above all, the Lombard Kings, produced a poetical feeling; and the fine weather so raised his spirits, that in the forest he again recited *Jock of Hazeldean* by my desire, after a long repetition from his favourite poem of *Hardyknute*.

'On the following day we returned to Naples, but Sir Walter went in his own carriage, and complained to me afterwards that he had never been able to discover the "Knight's Tower," it being, in fact, only visible by turning back to a person travelling in that direction. He expressed himself at all times much delighted with our amiable hostess, Miss Whyte; remarking very justly that she had nothing cold about her but her house, which being in the mountains, is, in fact, by no means eligible at that season of the year.

'In one of our drives, the subject of Sir Walter's perhaps most popular romance, in which Lady Margaret Bellenden defends the Castle of Tillietudlem, was mentioned as having been translated into Italian under the title of "The Scottish Puritans," of which he highly approved. I told him how strange the names of the places and the personages appeared in their Italian garb, and remarked that the Castle was so well described, and seemed so true a picture, that I had always imagined he must have had some real fortress in view. He said it was very true; for the Castle he had visited, and had fallen so much in love with it, that he wanted to live there. He added a joke with regard to his having taken his hat off when he visited this favourite spot, remarking, that as the Castle had been uncovered for many centuries, he himself might be uncovered for an hour. "It had," said Sir Walter, "no roof, no windows, and not much wall. I should have had to make three miles of road, so before the affair was settled I got wiser."[1]

'On the 3rd of April, I accompanied Sir Walter to Pozzuoli and to Cumæ. We had a party of nine or ten ladies and gentlemen, and agreed to dine at the inn at Pozzuoli on our way back. I explained to Sir Walter the common history of all the objects which occurred on the road; and the account of Monte Nuovo, which rose in one night to its present elevation, destroying the village of Tre Pergole, and part of the Lucrine Lake, seemed particularly to strike his poetical imagination. There is a point in going toward the Arco Felice, whence, at a turn of the road, a very extensive and comprehensive view is obtained of the Lake of Avernus. The Temple of Apollo, the Lucrine Lake, the Monte Nuovo, Baiæ, Misenum, and the sea, are all seen at once; and here I considered it my duty, in quality of Cicerone, to enforce the knowledge of the localities. He attended to the names I repeated; and when I asked whether he thought himself sure of remembering the spot, he replied that he had it perfectly in his mind. I found, however, that something in the place had inspired him with other recollections of his own beloved country, and the Stuarts, —for on proceeding, he immediately repeated, in a grave tone and with great emphasis—

Up the craggy mountain, and down the mossy glen,
We canna gang a-milking, for Charlie and his men.

'I could not help smiling at this strange commentary on my dissertation upon the Lake of Avernus.'

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[1] See the account of Scott's early visit to Craignethan Castle, *ante*, vol. i. p. 267.

While at Naples, Sir Walter wrote frequently to his daughter Sophia, Mr. Cadell, Mr. Laidlaw, and myself. Some of these letters were of a very melancholy cast; for the dream about his debts being all settled was occasionally broken; and probably it was when that left him that he worked hardest at his Novels—though the habit of working had become so fixed that I may be wrong in this conjecture. In general, however, these last letters tell the same story of delusive hopes both as to health and wealth, of satisfaction in the resumption of his pen, of eagerness to be once more at Abbotsford, and of affectionate anxiety about the friends he was there to rejoin. Every one of those to Laidlaw has something about the poor people and the dogs. One to myself conveyed his desire that he might be set down for 'something as handsome as I liked' in a subscription then thought of for the Ettrick Shepherd; who that spring visited London, and was in no respect improved by his visit. Another to my wife bade her purchase a grand pianoforte which he wished to present to Miss Cadell, his bookseller's daughter. The same generous spirit was shown in many other communications.

I must transcribe one of Sir Walter's letters from Naples. It was addressed to Mrs. Scott of Harden, on the marriage of her daughter Anne to Charles Baillie, Esq., a son of her neighbour in the country, Mr. Baillie of Jerviswoode.

'*To Mrs. Scott of Harden.*

'NAPLES, PALAZZO CARAMANICO, *6th March* 1832.

'MY DEAREST MRS. SCOTT—Your kind letter of 8th October, addressed to Malta, reached me only yesterday with a number of others which had been tarrying at Jericho till their beards grew. This was in one respect inconvenient, as I did not gain the benefit of your advice with regard to my travels, which would have had a great influence with me. Moreover, I did not learn the happy event in your own family till a newspaper told it me by accident long ago. But as my good wishes are most sincere, it is of less consequence when they reach the parties concerned, and I flatter myself I possess so much interest with my young friends as to give me credit for most warmly wishing them all the happiness which this auspicious event promises. The connexion must be in every respect agreeable to the feelings of both families, and not less so to those of a former generation, provided they are permitted, as I flatter myself, to take interest in the affairs of this life.

'I envied your management of the pencil when at Malta, as frequently elsewhere; it is quite a place made to be illustrated; by the way, I have got an esquisse of Old Smailholm Tower from the pencil of Mr. Turner. Besides the other advantages of Malta, it possesses John Hookham Frere, who is one of the most entertaining men I know, and with whom I spent much of my time.

'Although I rather prefer Malta, I have no reason to complain of Naples. The society is very numerous and gay, and somewhat too frivolous for my time of life and infirmities: however, there are exceptions; especially poor Sir William Gell, a very accomplished scholar, who is lamer than I am, and never out of humour, though worried perpetually by the gout, which he bears with the greatest complaisance. He is engaged in vindicating, from the remains of the various public works in Italy, the truth, which Bryant and others have disputed, concerning the Roman History, as given by Livy and other authors, whom it has been of late fashionable to discredit. The Dilettante Society have, greatly to their credit, resolved to bring out this interesting book.

'It has been Carnival time, and the balls are without number, besides being pelted to death with sugar-plums, which is quite the rage. But now Lent is approaching to sober us after all our gaiety, and every one seems ashamed of being happy, and preparing to look grave with all his might.

'I should have said something of my health, but have nothing to say, except that I am pretty well, and take exercise regularly, though, as Parson Adams says, it must be of the vehicular kind. I think I shall never ride or walk again. But I must not complain, for my plan of paying my debts, which you know gave me so much trouble some years since, has been, thank God, completely successful; and, what I think worth telling, I have paid very near £120,000, without owing any one a halfpenny—at least I am sure this will be the case by midsummer. I know the laird will give me much joy on this occasion, which, considering the scale upon which I have accomplished it, is a great feat. I wish I were better worthy the kindness of the public; but I am at least entitled to say

'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

Also some industry and some steadiness were necessary. I believe, indeed, I made too great an exertion; but if I get better, as seems likely, it is little enough for so happy a result. The young people have been very happy—which makes me think that about next spring I will give your young couple a neighbourly dance. It will be about this time that I take the management of my affairs again. You must patronise me.

'My love to Henry, as well as to the young couple. He should go and do likewise.—Your somewhat ancient, but very sincere friend, WALTER SCOTT.'

CHAPTER LXXXIII

Death of Goethe—Rome—Memoranda by Sir W. Gell and Mr. Edward Cheney—Journey to Frankfort—The Rhine Steam-boat—Fatal seizure at Nimeguen—Arrival in London—Jermyn Street—Edinburgh—Abbotsford—Death and Burial.

April—Sept. 1832

His friend Sir Frederick Adam had urgently invited Sir Walter to visit the Ionian Islands, and he had consented to do so. But Sir Frederick was suddenly recalled from that government, and appointed to one in India, and the Greek scheme dropped. From that time his companions ceased to contend against his wishes for returning home. Since he would again work, what good end could it serve to keep him from working at his own desk? And as their entreaties, and the warnings of foreign doctors, proved alike unavailing as to the regulation of his diet, what remaining chance could there be on that score, unless from replacing him under the eye of the friendly physicians whose authority had formerly seemed to have due influence on his mind? He had wished to return by the route of the Tyrol and Germany, partly for the sake of the remarkable chapel and monuments of the old Austrian princes at Inspruck, and the feudal ruins upon the Rhine, but chiefly that he might have an interview with Goethe at Weimar. That poet died on the 22nd of March, and the news seemed to act upon Scott exactly as the illness of Borthwickbrae had done in the August before. His impatience redoubled: all his fine dreams of recovery seemed to vanish at once—'Alas for Goethe!' he exclaimed: 'but he at least died at home—Let us to Abbotsford.' And he quotes more than once in his letters the first hemistich of the line from Politian with which he had closed his early memoir of Leyden—'*Grata quies Patriæ.*'

When the season was sufficiently advanced, then, the party set out, Mr. Charles Scott having obtained leave to accompany his father; which was quite necessary, as his elder brother had already been obliged to rejoin his regiment. They quitted Naples on the 16th of April, in an open barouche, which could at pleasure be converted into a bed.

It will be seen from notes about to be quoted, that Sir Walter was somewhat interested by a few of the objects presented to him in the earlier stages of his route. The certainty that he was on his way home, for a time soothed and composed him; and amidst the agreeable society which again surrounded him on his arrival in Rome, he seemed perhaps as much of himself as he had ever been in Malta or in Naples. For a moment even his literary hope and ardour appear to have revived. But still his daughter entertained no doubt, that his consenting to pause for even a few days in Rome, was dictated mainly by consideration of her natural curiosity. Sir William Gell went to Rome about the same time; and Sir Walter was introduced there to another accomplished countryman, who exerted himself no less than did Sir William, to render his stay agreeable to him. This was Mr. Edward Cheney—whose family had long been on terms of very strict intimacy with the Maclean Clephanes of Torloisk, so that Sir Walter was ready to regard him at first sight as a friend. I proceed to give some extracts from these gentlemen's *memoranda*.

'At Rome' (says Gell) 'Sir Walter found an apartment provided for him in the Casa Bernini. On his arrival, he seemed to have suffered but little from the journey; though I believe the length of time he was obliged to sit in a carriage had been occasionally the cause of troublesome symptoms. I found him, however, in very good spirits, and as he was always eager to see any spot remarkable as the scene of particular events recorded in history, so he was keenly bent on visiting the house where Benvenuto Cellini writes that he slew the Constable of Bourbon with a bullet fired from the Castle of St. Angelo. The Chevalier Luigi Chiaveri took him to the place, of which, though he quickly forgot the position, he yet retained the history firmly fixed in his mind, and to which he very frequently recurred.

'The introduction of Mr. Cheney was productive of great pleasure to Sir Walter, as he possessed at that moment the Villa Muti, at Frescati, which had been for many years the favourite residence of the Cardinal of York, who was Bishop of Tusculum.

'Soon after his arrival I took Sir Walter to St. Peter's, which he had resolved to visit, that he might see the tomb of the last of the Stuarts. I took him to one of the side doors, in order to shorten the walk, and by great good fortune met with Colonel Blair[1] and Mr. Phillips, under whose protection he accomplished his purpose. We contrived to tie a glove round the point of his stick, to prevent his slipping in some degree ; but to conduct him was really a service of danger and alarm, owing to his infirmity and total want of caution. He has been censured for not having frequently visited the treasures of the Vatican—but by those only who were unacquainted with the difficulty with which he moved. Days and weeks must have been passed in this immense museum, in order to have given him any idea of its value, nor do I know that it would have been possible for him to have ascended the rugged stairs, or to have traced its corridors and interminable galleries, in the state of reduced strength and dislike to being assisted under which he then laboured.

'On the 8th of May we all dined at the Palace of the Duchess Torlonia with a very large company. The dinner was very late and very splendid, and from the known hospitality of the family it was probable that Sir Walter, in the heat of conversation, and with servants on all sides pressing him to eat and drink, as is their custom at Rome, might be induced to eat more than was safe for his malady. Colonel Blair, who sat next him, was requested to take care that this should not happen. Whenever I observed him, however, Sir Walter appeared always to be eating; while the Duchess, who had discovered the nature of the office imposed on the Colonel, was by no means satisfied, and after dinner observed that it was an odd sort of friendship which consisted in starving one's neighbour to death—when he had a good appetite, and there was dinner enough.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 239.

'It was at this entertainment that Sir Walter met with the Duke and Duchess of Corchiano, who were both well read in his works, and delighted to have been in company with him. This acquaintance might have led to some agreeable consequences had Sir Walter's life been spared, for the Duke told him he was possessed of a vast collection of papers, giving true accounts of all the murders, poisonings, intrigues, and curious adventures of all the great Roman families during many centuries, all which were at his service to copy and publish in his own way as historical romances, only disguising the names, so as not to compromise the credit of the existing descendants of the families in question. Sir Walter listened to the Duke for the remainder of the evening, and was so captivated with all he heard from that amiable and accomplished personage, that at one moment he thought of remaining for a time at Rome, and at another he vowed he would return there in the ensuing winter. Whoever has read any of these memoirs of Italian families, of which many are published, and very many exist in manuscript, will acknowledge how they abound in strange events and romantic stories, and may form some idea of the delight with which Sir Walter imagined himself on the point of pouncing upon a treasure after his own heart.

'The eldest son of the Torlonia family is the possessor of the castle of Bracciano, of which he is duke. Sir

Walter was anxious to see it, and cited some story, I think of the Orsini, who once were lords of the place. We had permission to visit the castle, and the steward had orders to furnish us with whatever was requisite. We set off on the 9th of May, Sir Walter as usual coming with me, and two ladies and two gentlemen occupying his carriage. One of these last was the son of the Duke of Sermoneta, Don Michelangelo Gaetani, a person of the most amiable disposition, gentlemanly manners, and most remarkable talents. Sir Walter, to whom he had paid every attention during his stay at Rome, had conceived a high opinion of him, and, added to his agreeable qualities, he had a wonderful and accurate knowledge of the history of his own country during the darker ages. The Gaetani figured also among the most ancient and most turbulent of the Roman families during the Middle Ages; and these historical qualities, added to the amenity of his manners, rendered him naturally a favourite with Sir Walter.

'We arrived at Bracciano, twenty-five miles from Rome, rather fatigued with the roughness of an old Roman road, the pavement of which had generally been half destroyed, and the stones left in disorder on the spot. He was pleased with the general appearance of that stately pile, which is finely seated upon a rock, commanding on one side the view of the beautiful lake with its wooded shores, and on the other overlooking the town of Bracciano. A carriage could not easily ascend to the court, so that Sir Walter fatigued himself still more, as he was not content to be assisted, by walking up the steep and somewhat long ascent to the gateway. He was struck with the sombre appearance of the Gothic towers, built with the black lava which had once formed the pavement of the Roman road, and which adds much to its frowning magnificence. In the interior he could not but be pleased with the grand suite of state apartments, all yet habitable, and even retaining in some rooms the old furniture and the rich silk hangings of the Orsini and Odescalchi. These chambers overlook the lake, and Sir

Walter sat in a window for a long time, during a delightful evening, to enjoy the prospect. A very large dog, of the breed called Danish, coming to fawn upon him, he told it he was glad to see it, for it was a proper accompaniment to such a castle, but that he had a larger dog at home, though maybe not so good-natured to strangers. This notice of the dog seemed to gain the heart of the steward, and he accompanied Sir Walter in a second tour through the grand suite of rooms—each, as Sir Walter observed, highly pleased with the other's conversation, though as one spoke French and the other Italian, little of it could be understood. Toward the town, a range of smaller apartments are more convenient, except during the heats of summer, than the great rooms for a small party, and in these we dined and found chambers for sleeping. At night we had tea and a large fire, and Sir Walter conversed cheerfully.—Some of the party went out to walk round the battlements of the castle by moonlight, and a ghost was talked of among the usual accompaniments of such situations. He told me that the best way of making a ghost was to paint it with white on tin, for that in the dusk, after it had been seen, it could be instantly made to vanish, by turning the edge almost without thickness towards the spectator.

'On coming down next morning I found that Sir Walter, who rose early, had already made another tour over part of the Castle with the steward and the dog. After breakfast we set out on our return to Rome; and all the way his conversation was more delightful, and more replete with anecdotes than I had ever known it. He talked a great deal to young Gaetani who sat on the box, and he invited him to Scotland. He asked me when I thought of revisiting England, and I replied, that if my health permitted at a moment when I could afford it, I might perhaps be tempted in the course of the following summer. "If the money be the difficulty," said the kind-hearted baronet, "don't let that hinder you; I've £300 at your service, and I have a perfect right to give it you, and nobody can complain of me, for I made it myself."

'He continued to press my acceptance of this sum, till I requested him to drop the subject, thanking him most gratefully for his goodness, and much flattered by so convincing a proof of his desire to see me at Abbotsford.

'I remember particularly a remark, which proved the kindness of his heart. A lady requested him to do something which was very disagreeable to him. He was asked whether he had consented. He replied, "Yes." He was then questioned why he had agreed to do what was so inconvenient to him;—"Why," said he, "as I am now good for nothing else, I think it as well to be good-natured."

'I took my leave of my respected friend on the 10th May 1832. I knew this great genius and estimable man but for a short period; but it was at an interesting moment, and being both invalids, and impressed equally with the same conviction that we had no time to lose, we seemed to become intimate without passing through the usual gradations of friendship. I remembered just enough of Scottish topography and northern antiquities in general to be able to ask questions on subjects on which his knowledge was supereminent, and to be delighted and edified by his inexhaustible stock of anecdotes, and his curious and recondite erudition; and this was perhaps a reason for the preference he seemed to give me in his morning drives, during which I saw most of him alone. It is a great satisfaction to have been intimate with so celebrated and so benevolent a personage; and I hope that these recollections of his latter days may not be without their value, in enabling those who were acquainted with Sir Walter in his most brilliant period, to compare it with his declining moments during his residence in Italy.'

Though some of the same things recur in the notes with which I am favoured by Mr. Cheney, yet the reader will pardon this—and even be glad to compare the impressions of two such observers. Mr. Cheney says:—

'Delighted as I was to see Sir Walter Scott, I remarked with pain the ravages disease had made upon him. He was often abstracted ; and it was only when warmed with his subject that the light blue eye shot, from under the pent-house brow, with the fire and spirit that recalled the Author of Waverley.

'The 1st of May was appointed for a visit to Frescati; and it gave me great pleasure to have an opportunity of showing attention to Sir Walter without the appearance of obtrusiveness.

'The Villa Muti, which belonged to the late Cardinal of York, has, since his death, fallen into the hands of several proprietors ; it yet retains, however, some relics of its former owner. There is a portrait of Charles I., a bust of the Cardinal, and another of the Chevalier de St. George. But, above all, a picture of the *fête* given on the promotion of the Cardinal in the Piazza de SS. Apostoli (where the palace in which the Stuarts resided still bears the name of the Palazzo del Pretendente) occupied Sir Walter's attention. In this picture he discovered, or fancied he did so, the portraits of several of the distinguished followers of the exiled family. One he pointed out as resembling a picture he had seen of Cameron of Lochiel, whom he described as a dark, hard-featured man. He spoke with admiration of his devoted loyalty to the Stuarts. I also showed him an ivory head of Charles I., which had served as the top of Cardinal York's walking-stick. He did not fail to look at it with a lively interest.

'He admired the house, the position of which is of surpassing beauty, commanding an extensive view over the Campagna of Rome ; but he deplored the fate of his favourite princes, observing that this was a poor substitute for all the splendid palaces to which they were heirs in England and Scotland. The place where we were suggested the topic of conversation. He was walking, he told me, over the field of Preston, and musing on the unlooked-for event of that day, when he was suddenly startled by the sound of the minute-guns proclaiming the death of George IV.[1] Lost in the thoughts of ephemeral glory suggested by the scene, he had forgotten, in the momentary success of his favourite hero, his subsequent misfortunes and defeat. The solemn sound, he added, admonished him of the futility of all earthly triumphs ; and reminded him that the whole race of the Stuarts had passed away, and was now followed to the grave by the first of the royal house of Brunswick who had reigned in the line of legitimate succession.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 273.

'During this visit Sir Walter was in excellent spirits ; at dinner he talked and laughed, and Miss Scott assured me she had not seen him so gay since he left England. He put salt into his soup before tasting it, smiling as he did so. One of the company said that a friend of his used to declare that he should eat salt with a limb of Lot's wife. Sir Walter laughed, observing that he was of Mrs. Siddons's mind, who, when dining with the Provost of Edinburgh, and being asked by her host if the beef were too salt, replied, in her emphatic tones of deep tragedy, which Sir Walter mimicked very comically,

Beef cannot be too salt for me, my lord.

'Sir Walter, though he spoke no foreign language with facility, read Spanish as well as Italian. He expressed the most unbounded admiration for Cervantes, and said that the "novelas" of that author had first inspired him with the ambition of excelling in fiction, and that, until disabled by illness, he had been a constant reader of them. He added, that he had formerly made it a practice to read through the "Orlando" of Boiardo, and the "Orlando" of Ariosto, once every year.

'Of Dante he knew little, confessing he found him too obscure and difficult. I was sitting next him at dinner, at Lady Coventry's, when this conversation took place. He added, with a smile,—"It is mortifying that Dante seemed to think nobody worth being sent to hell but his own Italians, whereas other people had every bit as great rogues in their families, whose misdeeds were suffered to pass with impunity." I said that *he*, of all men, had least right to make this complaint, as his own ancestor, Michael Scott, was consigned to a very tremendous punishment in the twentieth canto of the Inferno. His attention was roused, and I quoted the passage—

> Quell' altro, che nei fianchi è cosi poco,
> Michele Scotto fu, che veramente
> Delle magiche frode seppe il gioco.

He seemed pleased, and alluded to the subject more than once in the course of the evening.

'One evening when I was with him, a person called to petition him in favour of the sufferers from the recent earthquake at Foligno. He instantly gave his name to the list with a very handsome subscription. This was by no means the only occasion on which I observed him eager and ready to answer the calls of charity.

'I accompanied Sir Walter and Miss Scott one morning to the Protestant burial-ground. The road to this spot runs by the side of the Tyber, at the foot of Mount Aventine, and in our drive we passed several of the most interesting monuments of ancient Rome. The house of the Tribune Rienzi, and the temple of Vesta, arrested his attention. This little circular temple, he said, struck him more than many of the finer ruins. Infirmity had checked his curiosity. "I walk with pain," he said, "and what we see whilst suffering, makes little impression on us; it is for this reason that much of what I saw at Naples, and which I should have enjoyed ten years ago, I have already forgotten." The Protestant burying-ground lies near the Porta S. Paolo, at the foot of the noble pyramid of Caius Cestius. Miss Scott was anxious to see the grave of her friend, Lady Charlotte Stopford. Sir Walter was unable to walk, and while my brother attended Miss Scott to the spot, I remained in the carriage with him. "I regret," he said, "that I cannot go. It would have been a satisfaction to me to have seen the place where they have laid her. She is the child of a Buccleuch; he, you know, is my chief, and all that comes from that house is dear to me." He looked on the ground and sighed, and for a moment there was a silence between us.

'We spoke of politics, and of the reform in Parliament, which at that time was pending. I asked his opinion of it; he said he was no enemy to reform—"If the machine does not work well, it must be mended—but it should be by the best workmen ye have."

'He regretted not having been at Holland House as he passed through London. "Lord Holland," he said, "is the most agreeable man I ever knew. In criticism, in poetry, he beats those whose whole study they have been. No man in England has a more thorough knowledge of English authors, and he expresses himself so well, that his language illustrates and adorns his thoughts, as light streaming through coloured glass heightens the brilliancy of the objects it falls upon."

'On the 4th of May he accepted a dinner at our house, and it gave my brother and myself unfeigned satisfaction to have again the pleasure of entertaining him. We collected a party to meet him, and amongst others I invited Don Luigi Santa Croce, one of his most ardent admirers, who had long desired an introduction. He is a man of much ability, and has played his part in the political changes of his country. When I presented him to Sir Walter, he bade me tell him (for he speaks no English) how long and how earnestly he had desired to see him, though he had hardly dared to hope it. "Tell him," he added, with warmth, "that in disappointment, in sorrow, and in sickness, his works have been my chief comfort; and while living amongst his imaginary personages, I have succeeded for a moment in forgetting the vexations of blighted hopes, and have found relief in public and private distress." The Marchesa Loughi, the beautiful sister of Don Michele Gaetani, whom I also presented to him this evening, begged me to thank him, in her name, for some of the most agreeable moments of her life. "She had had," she said, "though young, her share of sorrows, and in his works she had found not only amusement, but lessons of patience and resignation, which she hoped had not been lost upon her." To all these flattering compliments, as well as to the thousand others that were daily showered upon him, Sir Walter replied with unfeigned humility, expressing himself pleased and obliged by the good opinion entertained of him, and delighting his admirers with the good-humour and urbanity with which he received them. Don Luigi talked of the plots of some of the novels, and earnestly remonstrated against the fate of Clara Mowbray, in St. Ronan's Well. "I am much obliged to the gentleman for the interest he takes in her," said Sir Walter, "but I could not save her, poor thing—it is against the rules—she had the bee in her bonnet." Don Luigi still insisted. Sir Walter replied—"No; but of all the murders that I have committed in that way, and few men have been guilty of more, there is none that went so much to my heart as the poor Bride of Lammermoor; but it could not be helped—it is all true."

'Sir Walter always showed much curiosity about the Constable Bourbon. I said that a suit of armour belonging to him was preserved in the Vatican. He eagerly asked after the form and construction, and enquired if he wore it on the day of the capture of Rome. That event had greatly struck his imagination. He told me he had always had an idea of weaving it into the story of a romance, and of introducing the traitor Constable as an actor. Cæsar Borgia was also a character whose vices and whole career appeared to him singularly romantic. Having heard him say this, I begged Don Michele Gaetani, whose ancestors had been dispossessed of their rich fiefs by that ambitious upstart, to show Sir Walter a sword, now in the possession of his family, which had once belonged to Borgia. The blade, which is very long and broad, is richly ornamented, and the arms of the Borgias are inlaid upon it, bearing the favourite motto of that tremendous personage—"Aut Cæsar, aut nihil." Sir Walter examined it with attention, commenting on the character of Borgia, and congratulating Don Michele on the possession of a relic doubly interesting in his hands.

'I continued a constant visitor at his house whilst he remained in Rome, and I also occasionally dined in his company, and took every opportunity of conversing with him. I observed with extreme pleasure, that he accepted willingly from me those trifling attentions which his infirmities required, and which all would have been delighted to offer. I found him always willing to converse on any topic. He spoke of his own works and of himself without reserve; never, however, introducing the subject nor dwelling upon it. His conversation had neither affectation nor restraint, and he was totally free from the morbid egotism of some men of genius. What surprised me most, and in one too who had so long been the object of universal admiration, was the unaffected humility with which he spoke of his own merits, and the sort of surprise with which he surveyed his own success. That this was a real feeling, none could doubt. The natural simplicity of his manner must have convinced the most incredulous. He was courteous and obliging to all, and towards women there was a dignified simplicity in his manner that was singularly pleasing. He would not allow even his infirmities to exempt him from the little courtesies of society. He always endeavoured to rise to address those who approached him, and once when my brother and myself accompanied him in his drive, it was not without difficulty that we could prevail on him not to seat himself with his back to the horses.

'I asked him if he meant to be presented at the Vatican, as I knew that his arrival had been spoken of, and that the Pope had expressed an interest about him. He said he respected the Pope as the most ancient sovereign of Europe, and should have great pleasure in paying his respects to him, did his state of health permit it. We talked of the ceremonies of the Church. He had been much struck with the benediction from the balcony of St. Peter's. I advised him to wait to see the procession of the Corpus Domini, and to hear the Pope

Saying the high, high mass,
All on St. Peter's day.

He smiled, and said those things were more poetical in description than in reality, and that it was all the better for him not to have seen it before he wrote about it—that any attempt to make such scenes more exact, injured the effect without conveying a clearer image to the mind of the reader—as the Utopian scenes and manners of Mrs. Radcliffe's Novels captivated the imagination more than the most laboured descriptions or the greatest historical accuracy.

'The morning after our arrival at Bracciano, when I left my room, I found Sir Walter already dressed, and seated in the deep recess of a window which commands an extensive view over the lake and surrounding country. He speculated on the lives of the turbulent lords of this ancient fortress, and listened with interest to such details as I could give him of their history. He drew a striking picture of the contrast between the calm and placid scene before us, and the hurry, din, and tumult of other days.

'Insensibly we strayed into more modern times. I never saw him more animated and agreeable. He was exactly what I could imagine him to have been in his best moments. Indeed I have several times heard him complain that his disease sometimes confused and bewildered his senses, while at others he was left with little remains of illness, except a consciousness of his state of infirmity. He talked of his Northern journey—of Manzoni, for whom he expressed a great admiration—of Lord Byron—and lastly, of himself. Of Lord Byron he spoke with admiration and regard, calling him always "poor Byron." He considered him, he said, the only poet we have had, since Dryden, of transcendent talents, and possessing more amiable qualities than the world in general gave him credit for.

'In reply to my question if he had never seriously thought of complying with the advice so often given him to write a tragedy, he answered—"Often, but the difficulty deterred me—my turn was not dramatic." Some of the mottoes, I urged, prefixed to the chapters of his novels, and subscribed "old play," were eminently in the taste of the old dramatists, and seemed to ensure success.

—"Nothing so easy," he replied, "when you are full of an author, as to write a few lines in his taste and style; the difficulty is to keep it up—besides," he added, "the greatest success would be but a spiritless imitation, or, at best, what the Italians call a *centone* from Shakspeare. No author has ever had so much cause to be grateful to the public as I have. All I have written has been received with indulgence."

'He said he was the more grateful for the flattering reception he had met with in Italy, as he had not always treated the Catholic religion with respect. I observed, that though he had exposed the hypocrites of all sects, no religion had any cause to complain of him, as he had rendered them all interesting by turns. Jews, Catholics, and Puritans, had all their saints and martyrs in his works. He was much pleased with this.

'He spoke of Goethe with regret; he had been in correspondence with him before his death, and had purposed visiting him at Weimar in returning to England. I told him I had been to see Goethe the year before, and that I had found him well, and though very old, in the perfect possession of all his faculties.—"Of all his faculties!" he replied; "it is much better to die than to survive them, and better still to die than live in the apprehension of it; but the worst of all," he added, thoughtfully, "would have been to have survived their partial loss, and yet to be conscious of his state."—He did not seem to be, however, a great admirer of some of Goethe's works. Much of his popularity, he observed, was owing to pieces which, in his latter moments, he might have wished recalled. He spoke with much feeling. I answered, that *he* must derive great consolation in the reflection that his own popularity was owing to no such cause. He remained silent for a moment, with his eyes fixed on the ground; when he raised them, as he shook me by the hand, I perceived the light blue eye sparkled with unusual moisture. He added—"I am drawing near to the close of my career; I am fast shuffling off the stage. I have been perhaps the most voluminous author of the day; and it *is* a comfort to me to think that I have tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principle, and that I have written nothing which on my deathbed I should wish blotted." I made no reply; and while we were yet silent, Don Michele Gaetani joined us, and we walked through the vast hall into the court of the castle, where our friends were expecting us.

'After breakfast, Sir Walter returned to Rome. The following day he purposed setting out on his northern journey. It was Friday. I was anxious that he should prolong his stay in Rome; and reminding him of his superstition, I told him he ought not to set out on the unlucky day. He answered, laughing—"Superstition is very picturesque, and I make it at times stand me in great stead; but I never allow it to interfere with interest or convenience."

'As I helped him down the steep court to his carriage, he said, as he stepped with pain and difficulty—"This is a sore change with me. Time was when I would hunt and shoot with the best of them, and thought it but a poor day's sport when I was not on foot from ten to twelve hours; but we must be patient."

'I handed him into his carriage; and in taking leave of me, he pressed me, with eager hospitality, to visit him at Abbotsford. The door closed upon him, and I stood for some moments watching the carriage till it was out of sight, as it wound through the portal of the Castle of Bracciano.

'Next day, Friday, May 11, Sir Walter left Rome.

'During his stay there he had received every mark of attention and respect from the Italians, who in not crowding to visit him, were deterred only by their delicacy and their dread of intruding on an invalid. The use of villas, libraries, and museums was pressed upon him. This enthusiasm was by no means confined to the higher orders. His fame, and even his works, are familiar to all classes—the stalls are filled with translations of his novels, in the cheapest forms; and some of the most popular plays and operas have been founded upon them. Some time after he left Italy, when I was travelling in the mountains of Tuscany, it has more than once occurred to me to be stopped in little villages, hardly accessible to carriages, by an eager admirer of Sir Walter, to enquire after the health of my illustrious countryman.'

The last jotting of Sir Walter's Diary—perhaps the last specimen of his handwriting[1]—records his starting from Naples on the 16th of April. After the 11th of May the story can hardly be told too briefly.

The irritation of impatience, which had for a moment been suspended by the aspect and society of Rome, returned the moment he found himself on the road, and seemed to increase hourly. His companions could with difficulty prevail on him to see even the falls of Terni, or the church of Santa Croce at Florence. On the 17th, a cold and dreary day, they passed the Apennines, and dined on the top of the mountains. The snow and the pines recalled Scotland, and he expressed pleasure at the sight of them. That night they reached Bologna, but he would see none of the interesting objects there—and next day, hurrying in like manner through Ferrara, he proceeded as far as Monselice. On the 19th he arrived at Venice; and he remained there till the 23rd; but showed no curiosity about anything except the Bridge of Sighs and the adjoining dungeons — down into which he would scramble, though the exertion was exceedingly painful to him. On the other historical features of that place—one so sure in other days to have inexhaustible attractions for him—he would not even look; and it was the same with all that he came within reach of—even with the fondly anticipated chapel at Inspruck—as they proceeded through the Tyrol, and so onwards, by Munich, Ulm, and Heidelberg, to Frankfort. Here (June 5) he entered a bookseller's shop; and the people seeing an English party, brought out among the first things a lithographed print of Abbotsford. He said—'I know that already, sir,' and hastened back to the inn without being recognised. Though in some parts of the journey they had very severe weather, he repeatedly wished to travel all the night as well as all the day; and the symptoms of an approaching fit were so obvious, that he was more than once bled, ere they reached Mayence, by the hand of his affectionate domestic.

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[1] A gentleman who lately travelled from Rome to the Tyrol informs me that in the Book of Guests, kept at one of the Inns on the road, Sir Walter's autograph remains as follows:—'*Sir Walter Scott—for Scotland.*'—[1839.]

At this town they embarked, on the 8th June, in the Rhine steamboat; and while they descended the famous river through its most picturesque region, he seemed to enjoy, though he said nothing, the perhaps unrivalled scenery it presented to him. His eye was fixed on the successive crags and castles, and ruined monasteries, each of which had been celebrated in some German ballad familiar to his ear, and all of them blended in the immortal panorama of Childe Harold. But so soon as they had passed Cologne, and nothing but flat shores, and here and there a grove of poplars and a village spire were offered to the vision, the weight of misery sunk down again upon him. It was near Nimeguen, on the evening of the 9th, that he sustained another serious attack of apoplexy, combined with paralysis. Nicolson's lancet restored, after the lapse of some minutes, the signs of animation; but this was the crowning blow. Next day he insisted on resuming his journey, and on the 11th was lifted into an English steamboat at Rotterdam.

He reached London about six o'clock on the evening of Wednesday the 13th of June. Owing to the unexpected rapidity of the journey, his eldest daughter had had no notice when to expect him; and fearful of finding her either out of town, or unprepared to receive him and his attendants under her roof, Charles Scott drove to the St. James's hotel in Jermyn Street, and established his quarters there before he set out in quest of his sister and myself. When we reached the hotel, he recognised us with many marks of tenderness, but signified that he was totally exhausted; so no attempt was made to remove him further, and he was put to bed immediately. Dr. Fergusson saw him the same night, and the next day Sir Henry Halford and Dr. Holland saw him also; and during the next three weeks the two latter visited him daily, while Fergusson was scarcely absent from his pillow. The Major was soon on the spot. To his children, all assembled once more about him, he repeatedly gave his blessing in a very solemn manner, as if expecting immediate death; but he was never in a condition for conversation, and sunk either into sleep or delirious stupor upon the slightest effort.

Mrs. Thomas Scott came to town as soon as she heard of his arrival, and remained to help us. She was more than once recognised and thanked. Mr. Cadell, too, arrived from Edinburgh, to render any assistance in his power. I think Sir Walter saw no other of his friends except Mr. John Richardson, and him only once. As usual, he woke up at the sound of a familiar voice, and made an attempt to put forth his hand, but it dropped powerless, and he said, with a smile—'Excuse my hand.' Richardson made a struggle to suppress his emotion, and, after a moment, got out something about Abbotsford and the woods, which he had happened to see shortly before. The eye brightened, and he said—'How does Kirklands get on?' Mr. Richardson had lately purchased the estate so called on the Teviot, and Sir Walter had left him busied with plans of building. His friend told him that his new house was begun, and that the Marquis of Lothian had very kindly lent him one of his own, meantime, in its vicinity. 'Ay, Lord Lothian is a good man,' said Sir Walter; 'he is a man from whom one may receive a favour, and that's saying a good deal for any man in these days.' The stupor then sank back upon him, and Richardson never heard his voice again. This state of things continued till the beginning of July.

During these melancholy weeks, great interest and sympathy were manifested. Allan Cunningham mentions that, walking home late one night, he found several working-men standing together at the corner of Jermyn Street, and one of them asked him, as if there was but one deathbed in London — 'Do you know, sir, if this is the street where he is lying?' The enquiries both at the hotel and at my house were incessant; and I think there was hardly a member of the royal family who did not send every day. The newspapers teemed with paragraphs about Sir Walter; and one of these, it appears, threw out a suggestion that his travels had exhausted his pecuniary resources, and that if he were capable of reflection at all, cares of that sort might probably harass his pillow. This paragraph came from a very ill-informed, but, I daresay, a well-meaning quarter. It caught the attention of some members of the Government; and, in consequence, I received a private communication, to the effect that, if the case were as stated, Sir Walter's family had only to say what sum would relieve him from embarrassment, and it would be immediately advanced by the Treasury. The then Paymaster of the Forces, Lord John Russell, had the delicacy to convey this message through a lady with whose friendship he knew us to be honoured.[1] We expressed our grateful sense of his politeness, and of the liberality of the Government, and I now beg leave to do so once more; but his Lordship was of course informed that Sir Walter Scott was not situated as the journalist had represented.

Dr. Fergusson's memorandum on Jermyn Street will be acceptable to the reader. He says:—

'When I saw Sir Walter, he was lying in the second floor back-room of the St. James's Hotel in Jermyn Street, in a state of stupor, from which, however, he could be roused for a moment by being addressed, and then he recognised those about him, but immediately relapsed. I think I never saw anything more magnificent than the symmetry of his colossal bust, as he lay on the pillow with his chest and neck exposed. During the time he was in Jermyn Street he was calm but never collected, and in general either in absolute stupor or in a waking dream.

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[1] The Honourable Catherine Arden—daughter of Sir Walter's old friend Lady Alvanley.

He never seemed to know where he was, but imagined himself to be still in the steamboat. The rattling of carriages, and the noises of the street, sometimes disturbed this illusion, and then he fancied himself at the polling booth of Jedburgh, where he had been insulted and stoned.

'During the whole of this period of apparent helplessness, the great features of his character could not be mistaken. He always exhibited great self-possession, and acted his part with wonderful power whenever visited, though he relapsed the next moment into the stupor from which strange voices had roused him. A gentleman stumbled over a chair in his dark room;—he immediately started up, and though unconscious that it was a friend, expressed as much concern and feeling as if he had never been labouring under the irritability of disease. It was impossible even for those who most constantly saw and waited on him in his then deplorable condition, to relax from the habitual deference which he had always inspired. He expressed his will as determinedly as ever, and enforced it with the same apt and good-natured irony as he was wont to use.

'At length his constant yearning to return to Abbotsford induced his physicians to consent to his removal; and the moment this was notified to him, it seemed to infuse new vigour into his frame. It was on a calm, clear afternoon of the 7th July that every preparation was made for his embarkation on board the steamboat. He was placed on a chair by his faithful servant Nicolson, half-dressed, and loosely wrapped in a quilted dressing-gown. He requested Lockhart and myself to wheel him towards the light of the open window, and we both remarked the vigorous lustre of his eye. He sat there silently gazing on space for more than half an hour, apparently wholly occupied with his own thoughts, and having no distinct perception of where he was, or how he came there. He suffered himself to be lifted into his carriage, which was surrounded by a crowd, among whom were many gentlemen on horseback, who had loitered about to gaze on the scene.

'His children were deeply affected, and Mrs. Lockhart trembled from head to foot, and wept bitterly. Thus surrounded by those nearest to him, he alone was unconscious of the cause or the depth of their grief, and while yet alive seemed to be carried to his grave.'

On this his last journey Sir Walter was attended by his two daughters, Mr. Cadell, and myself—and also by Dr. James Watson, who (it being impossible for Dr. Fergusson to leave town at that moment) kindly undertook to see him safe at Abbotsford. We embarked in the James Watt steamboat, the master of which (Captain John Jamieson), as well as the agent of the proprietors, made every arrangement in their power for the convenience of the invalid. The Captain gave up for Sir Walter's use his own private cabin, which was a separate erection, a sort of cottage, on the deck; and he seemed unconscious, after laid in bed there, that any new removal had occurred. On arriving at Newhaven, late on the 9th, we found careful preparations made for his landing by the manager of the Shipping Company (Mr. Hamilton); and Sir Walter, prostrate in his carriage, was slung on shore, and conveyed from thence to Douglas's hotel, in St. Andrew's Square, in the same complete apparent unconsciousness. Mrs. Douglas had in former days been the Duke of Buccleuch's housekeeper at Bowhill, and she and her husband had also made the most suitable provision. At a very early hour on the morning of Wednesday the 11th, we again placed him in his carriage, and he lay in the same torpid state during the first two stages on the road to Tweedside. But as we descended the vale of the Gala he began to gaze about him, and by degrees it was obvious that he was recognising the features of that familiar landscape. Presently he murmured a name or two—'Gala Water, surely—Buckholm—Torwoodlee.' As we rounded the hill at Ladhope, and the outline of the Eildons burst on him, he became greatly excited, and when turning himself on the couch his eye caught at length his own towers, at the distance of a mile, he sprang up with a cry of delight. The river being in flood, we had to go round a few miles by Melrose bridge ; and during the time this occupied, his woods and house being within prospect, it required occasionally both Dr. Watson's strength and mine, in addition to Nicolson's, to keep him in the carriage. After passing the bridge, the road for a couple of miles loses sight of Abbotsford, and he relapsed into his stupor ; but on gaining the bank immediately above it, his excitement became again ungovernable.

Mr. Laidlaw was waiting at the porch, and assisted us in lifting him into the dining-room, where his bed had been prepared. He sat bewildered for a few moments, and then resting his eye on Laidlaw, said—'Ha! Willie Laidlaw! O man, how often have I thought of you!' By this time his dogs had assembled about his chair—they began to fawn upon him and lick his hands, and he alternately sobbed and smiled over them, until sleep oppressed him.

Dr. Watson having consulted on all things with Mr. Clarkson and his father, resigned the patient to them, and returned to London. None of them could have any hope, but that of soothing irritation. Recovery was no longer to be thought of: but there might be *Euthanasia.*

And yet something like a ray of hope did break in upon us next morning. Sir Walter awoke perfectly conscious where he was, and expressed an ardent wish to be carried out into his garden. We procured a Bath chair from Huntly-Burn, and Laidlaw and I wheeled him out before his door, and up and down for some time on the turf, and among the rose-beds then in full bloom. The grandchildren admired the new vehicle, and would be helping in their way to push it about. He sat in silence, smiling placidly on them and the dogs their companions, and now and then admiring the house, the screen of the garden, and the flowers and trees. By and by he conversed a little, very composedly, with us—said he was happy to be at home—that he felt better than he had ever done since he left it, and would perhaps disappoint the doctors after all.

He then desired to be wheeled through his rooms, and we moved him leisurely for an hour or more up and down the hall and the great library: 'I have seen much,' he kept saying, 'but nothing like my ain house—give me one turn more!' He was gentle as an infant, and allowed himself to be put to bed again, the moment we told him that we thought he had had enough for one day.

Next morning he was still better. After again enjoying the Bath chair for perhaps a couple of hours out of doors, he desired to be drawn into the library, and placed by the central window, that he might look down upon the Tweed. Here he expressed a wish that I should read to him, and when I asked from what book, he said, 'Need you ask? There is but one.' I chose the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel; he listened with mild devotion, and said when I had done—'Well, this is a great comfort—I have followed you distinctly, and I feel as if I were yet to be myself again.' In this placid frame he was again put to bed, and had many hours of soft slumber.

On the third day Mr. Laidlaw and I again wheeled him about the small piece of lawn and shrubbery in front of the house for some time; and the weather being delightful, and all the richness of summer around him, he seemed to taste fully the balmy influences of nature. The sun getting very strong, we halted the chair in a shady corner, just within the verge of his verdant arcade around the court-wall; and breathing the coolness of the spot, he said, 'Read me some amusing thing—read me a bit of Crabbe.' I brought out the first volume of his old favourite that I could lay hand on, and turned to what I remembered as one of his most favourite passages in it—the description of the arrival of the Players in the Borough. He listened with great interest, and also, as I soon perceived, with great curiosity. Every now and then he exclaimed, 'Capital—excellent—very good—Crabbe has lost nothing'—and we were too well satisfied that he considered himself as hearing a new production, when, chuckling over one couplet, he said—'Better and better—but how will poor Terry endure these cuts?' I went on with the poet's terrible sarcasms upon the theatrical life, and he listened eagerly, muttering, 'Honest Dan!'—'Dan won't like this.' At length I reached those lines—

Sad happy race! soon raised and soon depressed,
Your days all passed in jeopardy and jest:
Poor without prudence, with afflictions vain,
Not warned by misery, nor enriched by gain.

'Shut the book,' said Sir Walter—'I can't stand more of this—it will touch Terry to the very quick.'

On the morning of Sunday the 15th, he was again taken out into the little *pleasaunce*, and got as far as his favourite terrace-walk between the garden and the river, from which he seemed to survey the valley and the hills with much satisfaction. On re-entering the house, he desired me to read to him from the New Testament, and after that he again called for a little of Crabbe; but whatever I selected from that poet seemed to be listened to as if it made part of some new volume published while he was in Italy. He attended with this sense of novelty even to the tale of Phœbe Dawson, which not many months before he could have repeated every line of, and which I chose for one of these readings, because, as is known to every one, it had formed the last solace of Mr. Fox's deathbed. On the contrary, his recollection of whatever I read from the Bible appeared to be lively; and in the afternoon, when we made his grandson, a child of six years, repeat some of Dr. Watts' hymns by his chair, he seemed also to remember them perfectly. That evening he heard the Church service, and when I was about to close the book, said—'Why do you omit the visitation for the sick?'—which I added accordingly.

On Monday he remained in bed, and seemed extremely feeble; but after breakfast on Tuesday the 17th he appeared revived somewhat, and was again wheeled about on the turf. Presently he fell asleep in his chair, and after dozing for perhaps half an hour, started awake, and shaking the plaids we had put about him from off his shoulders, said—'This is sad idleness. I shall forget what I have been thinking of, if I don't set it down now.

Take me into my own room, and fetch the keys of my desk.' He repeated this so earnestly that we could not refuse; his daughters went into his study, opened his writing-desk, and laid paper and pens in the usual order, and I then moved him through the hall and into the spot where he had always been accustomed to work. When the chair was placed at the desk, and he found himself in the old position, he smiled and thanked us, and said—'Now give me my pen, and leave me for a little to myself.' Sophia put the pen into his hand, and he endeavoured to close his fingers upon it, but they refused their office—it dropped on the paper. He sank back among his pillows, silent tears rolling down his cheeks; but composing himself by and by, motioned to me to wheel him out of doors again. Laidlaw met us at the porch, and took his turn of the chair. Sir Walter, after a little while, again dropped into slumber. When he was awaking, Laidlaw said to me—'Sir Walter has had a little repose.' 'No, Willie,' said he—'no repose for Sir Walter but in the grave.' The tears again rushed from his eyes. 'Friends,' said he, 'don't let me expose myself—get me to bed—that's the only place.'[1]

With this scene ended our glimpse of daylight. Sir Walter never, I think, left his room afterwards, and hardly his bed, except for an hour or two in the middle of the day; and after another week he was unable even for this. During a few days he was in a state of painful irritation—and I saw realized all that he had himself prefigured in his description of the meeting between Chrystal Croftangry and his paralytic friend. Dr. Ross came out from Edinburgh, bringing with him his wife, one of the dearest *nieces* of the Clerks' Table. Sir Walter with some difficulty recognised the Doctor—but, on hearing Mrs. Ross's voice, exclaimed at once—'Isn't that Kate Hume?' These kind friends remained for two or three days with us. Clarkson's lancet was pronounced necessary, and the relief it afforded was, I am happy to say, very effectual.

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[1] As this is the last time I name Mr. Laidlaw, I may as well mention that this most excellent and amiable man is now factor on the estate of Sir Charles Lockhart Ross, Bart., of Balnagowan, in Ross-shire.

After this he declined daily, but still there was great strength to be wasted, and the process was long. He seemed, however, to suffer no bodily pain, and his mind, though hopelessly obscured, appeared, when there was any symptom of consciousness, to be dwelling, with rare exceptions, on serious and solemn things; the accent of the voice grave, sometimes awful, but never querulous, and very seldom indicative of any angry or resentful thoughts. Now and then he imagined himself to be administering justice as Sheriff; and once or twice he seemed to be ordering Tom Purdie about trees. A few times also, I am sorry to say, we could perceive that his fancy was at Jedburgh—and *Burk Sir Walter* escaped him in a melancholy tone. But commonly whatever we could follow him in was a fragment of the Bible (especially the Prophecies of Isaiah, and the Book of Job)—or some petition in the litany—or a verse of some psalm (in the old Scotch metrical version)—or of some of the magnificent hymns of the Romish ritual, in which he had always delighted, but which probably hung on his memory now in connexion with the Church services he had attended while in Italy. We very often heard distinctly the cadence of the *Dies Iræ*; and I think the very last stanza that we could make out was the first of a still greater favourite:—

Stabat Mater dolorosa,
Juxta crucem lachrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.

All this time he continued to recognise his daughters, Laidlaw, and myself, whenever we spoke to him—and received every attention with a most touching thankfulness. Mr. Clarkson, too, was always saluted with the old courtesy, though the cloud opened but a moment for him to do so. Most truly might it be said that the gentleman survived the genius.

After two or three weeks had passed in this way, I was obliged to leave Sir Walter for a single day, and go into Edinburgh to transact business, on his account, with Mr. Henry Cockburn (now Lord Cockburn), then Solicitor-General for Scotland. The Scotch Reform Bill threw a great burden of new duties and responsibilities upon the Sheriffs; and Scott's Sheriff-Substitute, the Laird of Raeburn, not having been regularly educated for the law, found himself incompetent to encounter these novelties, especially as regarded the registration of voters, and other details connected with the recent enlargement of the electoral franchise. Under such circumstances, as no one but the Sheriff could appoint another Substitute, it became necessary for Sir Walter's family to communicate the state he was in in a formal manner to the Law Officers of the Crown; and the Lord Advocate (Mr. Jeffrey), in consequence, introduced and carried through Parliament a short bill (2 and 3 William IV. cap. 101), authorizing the Government to appoint a new Sheriff of Selkirkshire, 'during the incapacity or non-resignation of Sir Walter Scott.' It was on this bill that the Solicitor-General had expressed a wish to converse with me: but there was little to be said, as the temporary nature of the new appointment gave no occasion for any pecuniary question; and, if that had been otherwise, the circumstances of the case would have rendered Sir Walter's family entirely indifferent upon such a subject. There can be no doubt, that if he had recovered in so far as to be capable of executing a resignation, the Government would have considered it just to reward thirty-two years' faithful services by a retired allowance equivalent to his salary—and as little that the Government would have had sincere satisfaction in settling that matter in the shape most acceptable to himself. And perhaps (though I feel that it is scarcely worth while) I may as well here express my regret that a statement highly unjust and injurious should have found its way into the pages of some of Sir Walter's preceding biographers. These writers have thought fit to insinuate that there was a want of courtesy and respect on the part of the Lord Advocate, and the other official persons connected with this arrangement. On the contrary, nothing could be more handsome and delicate than the whole of their conduct in it; Mr. Cockburn could not have entered into the case with greater feeling and tenderness, had it concerned a brother of his own; and when Mr. Jeffrey introduced his bill in the House of Commons, he used language so graceful and touching, that both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Croker went across the House to thank him cordially for it.

Perceiving, towards the close of August, that the end was near, and thinking it very likely that Abbotsford might soon undergo many changes, and myself, at all events, never see it again, I felt a desire to have some image preserved of the interior apartments as occupied by their founder, and invited from Edinburgh for that purpose Sir Walter's dear friend, William Allan—whose presence, I well knew, would even under the circumstances of that time be nowise troublesome to any of the family, but the contrary in all respects. Mr. Allan willingly complied, and executed a series of beautiful drawings. He also shared our watchings, and witnessed all but the last moments. Sir Walter's cousins, the ladies of Ashestiel, came down frequently, for a day or two at a time; and did whatever sisterly affections could prompt, both for the sufferer and his daughters. Miss Mary Scott (daughter of his uncle Thomas), and Mrs. Scott of Harden, did the like.

As I was dressing on the morning of Monday the 17th of September, Nicolson came into my room, and told me that his master had awoke in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see me immediately. I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm—every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. 'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.'—He paused, and I said—'Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?'—'No,' said he, 'don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night—God bless you all.'—With this he sunk into a very tranquil sleep, and, indeed, he scarcely afterwards gave any sign of consciousness, except for an instant on the arrival of his sons.—They, on learning that the scene was about to close, obtained anew leave of absence from their posts, and both reached Abbotsford on the 19th. About half-past one P.M., on the 21st of September, Sir Walter breathed his last, in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still, that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes.

No sculptor ever modelled a more majestic image of repose :—

Κεῖτο μέγας μεγαλωστὶ, λελασμένος ἱπποσυνάων·

Almost every newspaper that announced this event in Scotland, and many in England, had the signs of mourning usual on the demise of a king. With hardly an exception, the voice was that of universal, unmixed grief and veneration.

It was considered due to Sir Walter's physicians, and to the public, that the nature of his malady should be distinctly ascertained. The result was, that there appeared the traces of a very slight mollification in one part of the substance of the brain.[1]

[1] '*Abbotsford*, *Sept.* 23, 1832.—This forenoon, in presence of Dr. Adolphus Ross, from Edinburgh, and my father, I proceeded to examine the head of Sir Walter Scott.

'On removing the upper part of the cranium, the vessels on the surface of the brain appeared slightly turgid, and on cutting into the brain the cineritious substance was found of a darker hue than natural, and a greater than usual quantity of serum in the ventricles. Excepting these appearances, the right hemisphere seemed in a healthy state; but in the left, in the choroid plexus, three distinct though small hydatids were found; and on reaching the corpus striatum it was discovered diseased—a considerable portion of it being in a state of ramolissement. The blood-vessels were in a healthy state. The brain was not large—and the cranium thinner than it is usually found to be. J. B. Clarkson.'

His funeral was conducted in an unostentatious manner, but the attendance was very great. Few of his old friends then in Scotland were absent, and many, both friends and strangers, came from a great distance. His old domestics and foresters made it their petition that no hireling hand might assist in carrying his remains. They themselves bore the coffin to the hearse, and from the hearse to the grave. The pall-bearers were his sons, his son-in-law, and his little grandson; his cousins, Charles Scott of Nesbitt, James Scott of Jedburgh (sons to his uncle Thomas), William Scott of Raeburn, Robert Rutherford, Clerk to the Signet, Colonel (now Sir James) Russell of Ashestiel, William Keith (brother to Sir Alexander Keith of Ravelstone), and the chief of his family, Hugh Scott of Harden, now Lord Polwarth.

When the company was assembled, according to the usual Scotch fashion, prayers were offered up by the Very Reverend Dr. Baird, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and by the Reverend Dr. David Dickson, Minister of St. Cuthbert's, who both expatiated in a very striking manner on the virtuous example of the deceased.

The courtyard and all the precincts of Abbotsford were crowded with uncovered spectators as the procession was arranged; and as it advanced through Darnick and Melrose, and the adjacent villages, the whole population appeared at their doors in like manner, almost all in black. The train of carriages extended, I understand, over more than a mile; the Yeomanry followed in great numbers on horseback; and it was late in the day ere we reached Dryburgh. Some accident, it was observed, had caused the hearse to halt for several minutes on the summit of the hill at Bemerside—exactly where a prospect of remarkable richness opens, and where Sir Walter had always been accustomed to rein up his horse. The day was dark and lowering, and the wind high.

The wide enclosure at the Abbey of Dryburgh was thronged with old and young; and when the coffin was taken from the hearse, and again laid on the shoulders of the afflicted serving-men, one deep sob burst from a thousand lips. Mr. Archdeacon Williams read the Burial Service of the Church of England; and thus, about half-past five o'clock in the evening of Wednesday the 26th September 1832, the remains of SIR WALTER SCOTT were laid by the side of his wife in the sepulchre of his ancestors —'*in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.*'

CHAPTER LXXXIV

CONCLUSION

We read in Solomon—'The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy'; —and a wise poet of our own time thus beautifully expands the saying:

> Why should we faint and fear to live alone,
> Since all alone, so Heaven has willed, we die,
> Nor even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh?[1]

Such considerations have always induced me to regard with small respect any attempt to delineate fully and exactly any human being's character. I distrust, even in very humble cases, our capacity for judging our neighbour fairly; and I cannot but pity the presumption that must swell in the heart and brain of any ordinary brother of the race, when he dares to pronounce *ex cathedra*, on the whole structure and complexion of a great mind, from the comparatively narrow and scanty materials which can by possibility have been placed before him. Nor is the difficulty to my view lessened,—perhaps it is rather increased, when the great man is a great artist. It is true, that many of the feelings common to our nature can only be expressed adequately, and that some of the finest of them can only be expressed at all, in the language of art; and more especially in the language of poetry. But it is equally true, that high and sane art never attempts to express that for which the artist does not claim and expect general sympathy ; and however much of what we had thought to be our own secrets he ventures to give shape to, it becomes, I can never help believing, modest understandings to rest convinced that there remained a world of deeper mysteries to which the dignity of genius would refuse any utterance.

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[1] See Keble's Christian Year, p. 261.

I have therefore endeavoured to lay before the reader those parts of Sir Walter's character to which we have access, as they were indicated in his sayings and doings through the long series of his years—making use, whenever it was possible, of his own letters and diaries rather than of any other materials ;—but refrained from obtruding almost anything of comment. It was my wish to let the character develop itself: and conscious that I have wilfully withheld nothing that might assist the mature reader to arrive at just conclusions, I am by no means desirous of drawing out a detailed statement of my own. I am not going to 'peep and botanize' upon his grave. But a few general observations will be forgiven—perhaps expected.

I believe that if the history of any one family in upper or middle life could be faithfully written, it might be as generally interesting, and as permanently useful, as that of any nation, however great and renowned. But literature has never produced any worthy book of this class, and probably it never will. The only lineages in which we can pretend to read personal character far back, with any distinctness, are those of kings and princes, and a few noble houses of the first eminence ; and it hardly needed Swift's biting satire to satisfy the student of the past, that the very highest pedigrees are as uncertain as the very lowest. We flatter the reigning monarch, or his haughtier satellite, by tracing in their lineaments the mighty conqueror or profound legislator of a former century. But call up the dead, according to the Dean's incantation, and we might have the real ancestor in some chamberlain, confessor, or musician.

Scott himself delighted, perhaps above all other books, in such as approximate to the character of good family histories,—as for example, Godscroft's House of Douglas and Angus, and the Memorie of the Somervilles,—which last is, as far as I know, the best of its class in any language; and his reprint of the trivial 'Memorials' of the Haliburtons, to whose dust he is now gathered, was but one of a thousand indications of his anxiety to realize his own ancestry to his imagination. No testamentary deed, instrument of contract, or entry in a parish register seemed valueless to him, if it bore in any manner, however obscure or distant, on the personal history of any of his ascertainable predecessors. The chronicles of the race furnished the fireside talk to which he listened in infancy at Smailholm, and his first rhymes were those of Satchels. His physical infirmity was reconciled to him, even dignified perhaps, by tracing it back to forefathers who acquired famousness in their own way, in spite of such disadvantages. These studies led by easy and inevitable links to those of the history of his province generally, and then of his native kingdom. The lamp of his zeal burnt on brighter and brighter amidst the dust of parchments; his love and pride vivified whatever he hung over in these dim records, and patient antiquarianism, long brooding and meditating, became gloriously transmuted into the winged spirit of national poetry.

Whatever he had in himself, he would fain have made out a hereditary claim for. He often spoke both seriously and sportively on the subject. He had assembled about him in his 'own great parlour,' as he called it—the room in which he died—all the pictures of his ancestors that he could come by; and in his most genial evening mood he seemed never to weary of perusing them. The Cavalier of Killiecrankie—brave, faithful, learned, and romantic old 'Beardie,' a determined but melancholy countenance—was never surveyed without a repetition of the solitary Latin rhyme of his Vow. He had, of course, no portraits of the elder heroes of Harden to lecture upon; but a skilful hand had supplied the same wall with a fanciful delineation of the rough wooing of 'Meikle-mouthed

Meg'; and the only historical picture, properly so called, that he ever bespoke was to be taken (for it was never executed) from the Raid o' the Redswire, when

The Laird's Wat, that worthy man,
Brought in that surname weel beseen ;

And

The Rutherfords with great renown,
Convoyed the town o' Jedbrugh out.

The ardent but sagacious 'goodman of Sandyknowe' hangs by the side of his father, 'Bearded Wat'; and often, when moralizing in his latter day over the doubtful condition of his ultimate fortunes, Sir Walter would point to 'Honest Robin,' and say, 'Blood will out :—my building and planting was but his buying the hunter before he stocked his sheep-walk over again.' 'And yet,' I once heard him say, glancing to the likeness of his own staid calculating father, 'it was a wonder, too—for I have a thread of the attorney in me.' And so, no doubt, he had ; for the 'elements' were mingled in him curiously, as well as 'gently.'

An imagination such as his, concentrating its day-dreams on things of this order, soon shaped out a world of its own—to which it would fain accommodate the real one. The love of his country became indeed a passion ; no knight ever tilted for his mistress more willingly than he would have bled and died to preserve even the airiest surviving nothing of her antique pretensions for Scotland. But the Scotland of his affections had the clan Scott for her kernel. Next and almost equal to the throne was Buccleuch. Fancy rebuilt and most prodigally embellished the whole system of the social existence of the Middle Ages, in which the clansman (wherever there were clans) acknowledged practically no sovereign but his chief. The author of 'the Lay' would rather have seen his heir carry the Banner of Bellenden gallantly at a football match on Carterhaugh, than he would have heard that the boy had attained the highest honours of the first university in Europe. His original pride was to be an acknowledged member of one of the 'honourable families' whose progenitors had been celebrated by Satchels for following this banner in blind obedience to the patriarchal leader; his first and last worldly ambition was to be himself the founder of a distinct branch; he desired to plant a lasting root, and dreamt not of personal fame, but of long distant generations rejoicing in the name of 'Scott of Abbotsford.' By this idea all his reveries—all his aspirations—all his plans and efforts, were overshadowed and controlled. The great object and end only rose into clearer daylight, and swelled into more substantial dimensions, as public applause strengthened his confidence in his own powers and faculties; and when he had reached the summit of universal and unrivalled honour, he clung to his first love with the faith of a Paladin. It is easy enough to smile at all this; many will not understand it, and some who do may pity it. But it was at least a different thing from the modern vulgar ambition of amassing a fortune and investing it in land. The lordliest vision of acres would have had little charm for him, unless they were situated on Ettrick or Yarrow, or in

> Pleasant Tiviedale
> Fast by the river Tweed

—somewhere within the primeval territory of 'the Rough Clan.'

His worldly ambition was thus grafted on that ardent feeling for blood and kindred, which was the great redeeming element in the social life of what we call the Middle Ages; and—though no man estimated the solid advantages of modern existence more justly than he did when, restraining his fancy, he exercised his graver faculties on the comparison—it was the natural effect of the studies he devoted himself to and rose by, to indispose him for dwelling on the sober results of judgment and reason in all such matters. What a striking passage that is in one of his letters now printed, where he declines to write a biography of Queen Mary, 'because his opinion was contrary to his feeling'! But he confesses the same of his Jacobitism; and yet how eagerly does he seem to have grasped at the shadow, however false and futile, under which he chose to see the means of reconciling his Jacobitism with loyalty to the reigning monarch who befriended him? We find him, over and over again, alluding to George IV. as acquiring a title, *de jure*, on the death of the poor Cardinal of York! Yet who could have known better, that whatever rights the exiled males of the Stuart line ever possessed, must have remained entire with their female descendants?

The same resolution to give imagination her scope, and always in favour of antiquity, is the ruling principle and charm of all his best writings; and he indulged and embodied it so largely in his buildings at Abbotsford, that to have curtailed the exposition of his fond untiring enthusiasm on that score, would have been like omitting the Prince in a cast of Hamlet. So also with all the details of his hospitable existence, when he had fairly completed his 'romance in stone and lime';—every outline copied from some old baronial edifice in Scotland—every roof and window blazoned with clan bearings, or the lion rampant gules, or the heads of the ancient Stuart kings. He wished to revive the interior life of the castles he had emulated—their wide open joyous reception of all comers, but especially of kinsmen, allies, and neighbours—ballads and pibrochs to enliven flowing bowls and *quaighs*—jolly hunting fields in which yeoman and gentleman might ride side by side—and mirthful dances, where no Sir Piercy Shafton need blush to lead out the miller's daughter. In the brightest meridian of his genius and fame, this was his *beau ideal.* All the rest, however agreeable and flattering, was but 'leather and prunella' to this. There was much kindness surely in such ambition:—in spite of the apparent contradiction in terms, was there not really much humility about it?

To this ambition we owe the gigantic monuments of Scott's genius; and to the kindly feelings out of which his ambition grew, grew also his fatal connexion with merchandise. The Ballantynes were his old schoolfellows;

—and the reader has had means to judge whether, when once embarked in their concerns, he ever could have got out of them again, until rude calamity, at one blow, broke the meshes of his entanglement. I need not recur to that sad and complicated chapter. Nor, perhaps, need I offer any more speculations, by way of explaining, and reconciling to his previous and subsequent history and demeanour, either the mystery in which he had chosen to wrap his commercial connexions from his most intimate friends, or the portentous carelessness with which he abandoned these matters to the direction of negligent and inefficient colleagues. And yet I ought, I rather think, to have suggested to certain classes of my readers, at a much earlier stage, that no man could in former times be called either to the English or the Scottish Bar, who was known to have any direct interest in any commercial undertaking of any sort; and that the body of feelings or prejudices in which this regulation originated—(for though there might be sound reason for it besides, such undoubtedly was the main source)—prevailed in Scotland in Sir Walter's youth, to an extent of which the present generation may not easily form an adequate notion. In the minds of the 'northern *noblesse de la robe*,' as they are styled in Redgauntlet, such feelings had wide and potent authority; insomuch that I can understand perfectly how Scott, even after he ceased to practise at the bar, being still a Sheriff, and a member of the Faculty of Advocates, should have shrunk very sensitively from the idea of having his alliance with a trading firm revealed among his comrades of the gown. And, moreover, the practice of mystery is, perhaps, of all practices, the one most likely to grow into a habit; secret breeds secret; and I ascribe, after all, the long silence about Waverley to the matured influence of this habit, at least as much as to any of the motives which the author has thought fit to assign in his late confessions.

But was there not, in fact, something that lay far deeper than a mere professional prejudice?

Among many things in Scott's Diaries, which cast strong light upon the previous part of his history, the reluctance which he confesses himself to have always felt towards the resumption of the proper appointed task, however willing, nay eager, to labour sedulously on something else, can hardly have escaped the reader's notice. We know how gallantly he combated it in the general—but these precious Diaries themselves are not the least pregnant proofs of the extent to which it very often prevailed—for an hour or two at least, if not for the day.

I think this, if we were to go no farther, might help us somewhat in understanding the neglect about superintending the Messrs. Ballantynes' ledgers and bill books; and, consequently, the rashness about buying land, building, and the like.

But to what are we to ascribe the origin of this reluctance towards accurate and minute investigation and transaction of business of various sorts, so important to himself, in a man possessing such extraordinary sagacity, and exercising it every day with such admirable regularity and precision, in the various capacities of the head of a family — the friend — the magistrate — the most distinguished citizen of Edinburgh—beyond all comparison the most distinguished member of society that figured in his time in his native kingdom?

The whole system of conceptions and aspirations, of which his early active life was the exponent, resolves itself into a romantic idealization of Scottish aristocracy. He desired to secure for his descendants (for himself he had very soon acquired something infinitely more flattering to self-love and vanity) a decent and honourable middle station—in a scheme of life so constituted originally, and which his fancy pictured as capable of being so revived, as to admit of the kindliest personal contact between (almost) the peasant at the plough, and the magnate with revenues rivalling the monarch's. It was the patriarchal—the clan system, that he thought of; one that never prevailed even in Scotland, within the historical period that is to say, except in the Highlands, and in his own dear Border-land. This system knew nothing of commerce—as little certainly of literature beyond the raid-ballad of the wandering harper,—

High placed in hall—a welcome guest.

His filial reverence of imagination shrunk from marring the antique, if barbarous, simplicity. I suspect that at the highest elevation of his literary renown—when princes bowed to his name, and nations thrilled at it—he would have considered losing all that at a change of the wind, as nothing, compared to parting with his place as the Cadet of Harden and Clansman of Buccleuch, who had, no matter by what means, reached such a position, that when a notion arose of embodying 'a Buccleuch legion,' not a Scott in the Forest would have thought it otherwise than natural for *Abbotsford* to be one of the field-officers. I can, therefore, understand that he may have, from the very first, exerted the dispensing power of imagination very liberally, in virtually absolving himself from dwelling on the wood of which his ladder was to be constructed. Enough was said in a preceding chapter of the obvious fact, that the author of such a series of romances as his, must have, to all intents and purposes, lived more than half his life in worlds purely fantastic. In one of the last obscure and faltering pages of his Diary he says, that if any one asked him how much of his thought was occupied by the novel then in hand, the answer would have been, that in one sense it never occupied him except when the amanuensis sat before him, but that in another it was never five minutes out of his head. Such, I have no doubt, the case had always been. But I must be excused from doubting whether, when the substantive fiction actually in process of manufacture was absent from his mind, the space was often or voluntarily occupied (no positive external duty interposing) upon the real practical worldly position and business of the Clerk of Session—of the Sheriff, —least of all of the printer or the bookseller.

The sum is, if I read him aright, that he was always willing, in his ruminative moods, to veil, if possible, from his own optics the kind of machinery by which alone he had found the means of attaining his darling objects. Having acquired a perhaps unparalleled power over the direction of scarcely paralleled faculties, he chose to exert his power in this manner. On no other supposition can I find his history intelligible;—I mean, of course, the great obvious and marking facts of his history; for I hope I have sufficiently disclaimed all pretension to a thorough-going analysis. He appears to have studiously escaped from whatever could have interfered with his own enjoyment—to have revelled in the fair results, and waved the wand of obliterating magic over all besides; and persisted so long, that (like the sorcerer he celebrates) he became the dupe of his own delusions.

It is thus that (not forgetting the subsidiary influence of professional Edinburgh prejudices) I am inclined, on the whole, to account for his initiation in the practice of mystery—a thing, at first sight, so alien from the frank, open, generous nature of a man, than whom none ever had or deserved to have more real friends.

The indulgence cost him very dear. It ruined his fortunes—but I can have no doubt that it did worse than that. I cannot suppose that a nature like his was fettered and shut up in this way without suffering very severely from the 'cold obstruction.' There must have been a continual 'insurrection' in his 'state of man'; and, above all, I doubt not that what gave him the bitterest pain in the hour of his calamities, was the feeling of compunction with which he then found himself obliged to stand before those with whom he had, through life, cultivated brother-like friendship, convicted of having kept his heart closed to them on what they could not but suppose to have been the chief subjects of his thought and anxiety, in times when they withheld nothing from him. These, perhaps, were the 'written troubles' that had been cut deepest into his brain. I think they were, and believe it the more, because it was never acknowledged.

If he had erred in the primary indulgence out of which this sprang, he at least made noble atonement.

During the most energetic years of manhood he laboured with one prize in view; and he had just grasped it, as he fancied, securely, when all at once the vision was dissipated: he found himself naked and desolate as Job. How he nerved himself against the storm—how he felt and how he resisted it—how soberly, steadily, and resolvedly he contemplated the possibility of yet, by redoubled exertions, in so far retrieving his fortunes, as that no man should lose by having trusted those for whom he had been pledged—how well he kept his vow, and what price it cost him to do so,—all this the reader, I doubt not, appreciates fully. It seems to me that strength of character was never put to a severer test than when, for labours of love, such as his had hitherto almost always been—the pleasant exertion of genius for the attainment of ends that owed all their dignity and beauty to a poetical fancy—there came to be substituted the iron pertinacity of daily and nightly toil, in the discharge of a duty which there was nothing but the sense of chivalrous honour to make stringent.

It is the fond indulgence of gay fancy in all the previous story that gives its true value and dignity to the voluntary agony of the sequel, when, indeed, he appears

> Sapiens, sibique imperiosus;
> Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent;
> Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores,
> Fortis; et in seipso totus, teres atque rotundus,
> Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari;
> In quem manca ruit semper Fortuna.

The attentive reader will not deny that every syllable of this proud *ideal* has been justified to the letter. But though he boasted of stoicism, his heroism was something far better than the stoic's; for it was not founded on a haughty trampling down of all delicate and tender thoughts and feelings. He lays his heart bare in his Diary; and we there read, in characters that will never die, how the sternest resolution of a philosopher may be at once quickened and adorned by the gentlest impulses of that spirit of love, which alone makes poetry the angel of life.

This is the moment in which posterity will desire to fix his portraiture. It is then, truly, that

> He sits, 'mongst men, like a descended god ;
> He hath a kind of honour sets him off
> More than a mortal seeming.

But the noble exhibition was not a fleeting one ; it was not that a robust mind elevated itself by a fierce effort for the crisis of an hour. The martyrdom lasted with his days ; and if it shortened them, let us remember his own immortal words,—

> Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife,
> To all the sensual world proclaim—
> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name.

For the rest, I presume, it will be allowed that no human character, which we have the opportunity of studying with equal minuteness, had fewer faults mixed up in its texture. The grand virtue of fortitude, the basis of all others, was never displayed in higher perfection than in him ; and it was, as perhaps true courage always is, combined with an equally admirable spirit of kindness and humanity. His pride, if we must call it so, undebased by the least tincture of mere vanity, was intertwined with a most exquisite charity, and was not inconsistent with true humility. If ever the principle of kindliness was incarnated in a mere man, it was in him ; and real kindliness can never be but modest. In the social relations of life, where men are most effectually tried, no spot can be detected in him. He was a patient, dutiful, reverent son ; a generous, compassionate, tender husband ; an honest, careful, and most affectionate father. Never was a more virtuous or a happier fireside than his. The influence of his mighty genius shadowed it imperceptibly ; his calm good sense, and his angelic sweetness of heart and temper, regulated and softened a strict but paternal discipline. His children, as they grew up, understood by degrees the high privilege of their birth ; but the profoundest sense of his greatness never disturbed their confidence in his goodness. The buoyant play of his spirits made him sit young among the young; parent and son seemed to live in brotherhood together; and the chivalry of his imagination threw a certain air of courteous gallantry into his relations with his daughters, which gave a very peculiar grace to the fondness of their intercourse. Though there could not be a gentler mother than Lady Scott,—on those delicate occasions most interesting to young ladies, they always made their father the first confidant.

To the depth of his fraternal affection I ascribe, mainly, the only example of departure from the decorum of polished manners which a keen observer of him through life ever witnessed in him, or my own experience and information afford any trace of. Injuries done to himself no man forgave more easily—more willingly repaid by benefits. But it was not so when he first and unexpectedly saw before him the noble person who, as he considered things at the time, had availed himself of his parliamentary privilege to cast a shade of insult upon the character of his next and best-beloved brother.

But perhaps the most touching evidence of the lasting tenderness of his early domestic feelings was exhibited to his executors, when they opened his repositories in search of his testament, the evening after his burial. On lifting up his desk, we found arranged in careful order a series of little objects, which had obviously been so placed there that his eye might rest on them every morning before he began his tasks. These were the old-fashioned boxes that had garnished his mother's toilette, when he, a sickly child, slept in her dressing-room—the silver taper-stand which the young advocate had bought for her with his first five-guinea fee—a row of small packets inscribed with her hand, and containing the hair of those of her offspring that had died before her—his father's snuff-box and etui-case—and more things of the like sort, recalling

> The old familiar faces.

The same feeling was apparent in all the arrangement of his private apartment. Pictures of his father and mother were the only ones in his dressing-room. The clumsy antique cabinets that stood there, things of a very different class from the beautiful and costly productions in the public rooms below, had all belonged to the furniture of George's Square. Even his father's rickety washing-stand, with all its cramped appurtenances, though exceedingly unlike what a man of his very scrupulous habits would have selected in these days, kept its ground. The whole place seemed fitted up like a little chapel of the Lares.

Such a son and parent could hardly fail in any of the other social relations. No man was a firmer or more indefatigable friend. I know not that he ever lost one; and a few, with whom, during the energetic middle stage of life, from political differences or other accidental circumstances, he lived less familiarly, had all gathered round him, and renewed the full warmth of early affection in his later days. There was enough to dignify the connexion in their eyes; but nothing to chill it on either side. The imagination that so completely mastered him when he chose to give her the rein, was kept under most determined control when any of the positive obligations of active life came into question. A high and pure sense of duty presided over whatever he had to do as a citizen and a magistrate; and as a landlord, he considered his estate as an extension of his hearth.

Of his political creed, the many who hold a different one will of course say that it was the natural fruit of his poetical devotion to the mere prejudice of antiquity; and I am quite willing to allow that this must have had a great share in the matter—and that he himself would have been as little ashamed of the word *prejudice* as of the word *antiquity*.—Whenever Scotland could be considered as standing separate on any question from the rest of the empire, he was not only apt, but eager to embrace the opportunity of again rehoisting, as it were, the old signal of national independence; and I sincerely believe that no circumstance in his literary career gave him so much personal satisfaction as the success of Malachi Malagrowther's Epistles. He confesses, however, in his Diary, that he was aware how much it became him to summon calm reason to battle imaginative prepossessions on this score; and I am not aware that they ever led him into any serious practical error. He delighted in letting his fancy run wild about ghosts and witches and horoscopes—but I venture to say, had he sat on the judicial bench a hundred years before he was born, no man would have been more certain to give juries sound direction in estimating the pretended evidence of supernatural occurrences of any sort; and I believe, in like manner, that had any Anti-English faction, civil or religious, sprung up in his own time in Scotland, he would have done more than any other living man could have hoped to do, for putting it down. He was on all practical points a steady, conscientious Tory of the school of William Pitt; who, though an anti-revolutionist, was certainly anything but an anti-reformer. He rejected the innovations, in the midst of which he died, as a revival, under alarmingly authoritative auspices, of the doctrines which had endangered Britain in his youth, and desolated Europe throughout his prime of manhood. May the gloomy anticipations which hung over his closing years be unfulfilled! But should they be so, let posterity remember that the warnings, and the resistance of his and other powerful intellects, were probably in that event the appointed means for averting a catastrophe in which, had England fallen, the whole civilized world must have been involved.

Sir Walter received a strictly religious education under the eye of parents, whose virtuous conduct was in unison with the principles they desired to instil into their children. From the great doctrines thus recommended he appears never to have swerved; but he must be numbered among the many who have incurred considerable risk of doing so, in consequence of the rigidity with which Presbyterian heads of families, in Scotland, were used to enforce compliance with various relics of the puritanical observance.

He took up, early in life, a repugnance to the mode in which public worship is conducted in the Scottish Establishment; and adhered to the sister Church, whose system of government and discipline he believed to be the fairest copy of the primitive polity, and whose litanies and collects he reverenced as having been transmitted to us from the age immediately succeeding that of the Apostles. The few passages in his Diaries, in which he alludes to his own religious feelings and practices, show clearly the sober, serene, and elevated frame of mind in which he habitually contemplated man's relations with his Maker; the modesty with which he shrunk from indulging either the presumption of reason, or the extravagance of imagination, in the province of Faith; his humble reliance on the wisdom and mercy of God; and his firm belief that we are placed in this state of existence, not to speculate about another, but to prepare ourselves for it by actual exertion of our intellectual faculties, and the constant cultivation of kindness and benevolence towards our fellow-men.

But his moral, political, and religious character has sufficiently impressed itself upon the great body of his writings. He is indeed one of the few great authors of modern Europe who stand acquitted of having written a line that ought to have embittered the bed of death. His works teach the practical lessons of morality and Christianity in the most captivating form—unobtrusively and unaffectedly. And I think it is not refining too far to say, that in these works, as well as his whole demeanour as a man of letters, we may trace the happy effects—(enough has already been said as to some less fortunate and agreeable ones)—of his having written throughout with a view to something beyond the acquisition of personal fame. Perhaps no great poet ever made his literature so completely ancillary to the objects and purposes of practical life. However his imagination might expatiate, it was sure to rest over his home. The sanctities of domestic love and social duty were never forgotten; and the same circumstance that most ennobles all his triumphs, affords also the best apology for his errors.

I have interwoven in these pages some record of whatever struck myself as pre-eminently acute in the critical essays bestowed on Scott's works by his contemporaries; but I have little doubt that the best of these essays will in due time be collected together, and accompany, *in extenso*, a general edition of his writings. From the first, his possession of a strong and brilliant genius was acknowledged; and the extent of it seems to have been guessed by others, before he was able to persuade himself that he had claim to a place among the masters of literature. The ease with which he did everything, deceived him; and he probably would never have done himself any measure of justice, even as compared with those of his own time, but for the fact, which no modesty could long veil, that whatever he did became immediately '*the fashion*,'—the object of all but universal imitation. Even as to this, he was often ready to surmise that the priority of his own movement might have been matter of accident; and certainly nothing can mark the humility of his mind more strikingly than the style in which he discusses, in his Diary, the pretensions of the pigmies that swarmed and fretted in the deep wake of his mighty vessel. To the really original writers among his contemporaries he did full justice; no differences of theory or taste had the least power to disturb his candour. In some cases he rejoiced in feeling and expressing a cordial admiration, where he was met by, at best, a cold and grudging reciprocity: and in others, his generosity was proof against not only the private belief, but the public exposure of envious malignity. Lord Byron might well say that Scott could be jealous of no one; but the immeasurable distance did not prevent many from being jealous of him.

His propensity to think too well of other men's works sprung, of course, mainly, from his modesty and good-nature; but the brilliancy of his imagination greatly sustained the delusion. It unconsciously gave precision to the trembling outline, and life and warmth to the vapid colours before him. This was especially the case as to romances and novels; the scenes and characters in them were invested with so much of the 'light within,' that he would close with regret volumes which, perhaps, no other person, except the diseased glutton of the circulating library, ever could get half through. Where colder critics saw only a schoolboy's hollowed turnip with its inch of tallow, he looked through the dazzling spray of his own fancy, and sometimes the clumsy toy seems to have swelled almost into 'the majesty of buried Denmark.'

These servile imitators are already forgotten, or will soon be so; but it is to be hoped that the spirit which breathes through his works may continue to act on our literature, and consequently on the character and manners of men. The race that grew up under the influence of that intellect can hardly be expected to appreciate fully their own obligations to it: and yet if we consider what were the tendencies of the minds and works that, but for his, must have been unrivalled in the power and opportunity to mould young ideas, we may picture to ourselves in some measure the magnitude of the debt we owe to a perpetual succession, through thirty years, of publications unapproached in charm, and all instilling a high and healthy code; a bracing, invigorating spirit; a contempt of mean passions, whether vindictive or voluptuous; humane charity, as distinct from moral laxity, as from unsympathizing austerity; sagacity too deep for cynicism, and tenderness never degenerating into sentimentality: animated throughout in thought, opinion, feeling, and style, by one and the same pure energetic principle—a pith and savour of manhood; appealing to whatever is good and loyal in our natures, and rebuking whatever is low and selfish.

Had Sir Walter never taken a direct part in politics as a writer, the visible bias of his mind on such subjects must have had a great influence; nay, the mere fact that such a man belonged to a particular side would have been a very important weight in the balance. His services, direct and indirect, towards repressing the revolutionary propensities of his age, were vast—far beyond the comprehension of vulgar politicians.

On the whole, I have no doubt that, the more the details of his personal history are revealed and studied, the more powerfully will that be found to inculcate the same great lessons with his works. Where else shall we be taught better how prosperity may be extended by beneficence, and adversity confronted by exertion? Where can we see the 'follies of the wise' more strikingly rebuked, and a character more beautifully purified and exalted in the passage through affliction to death? I have lingered so long over the details, that I have, perhaps, become, ever from that circumstance alone, less qualified than more rapid surveyors may be to seize the effect in the mass. But who does not feel that there is something very invigorating as well as elevating in the contemplation? His character seems to belong to some elder and stronger period than ours; and, indeed, I cannot help likening it to the architectural fabrics of other ages, which he most delighted in, where there is such a congregation of imagery and tracery, such endless indulgence of whim and fancy, the sublime blending here with the beautiful, and there contrasted with the grotesque—half, perhaps, seen in the clear daylight, and half by rays tinged with the blazoned forms of the past—that one may be apt to get bewildered among the variety of particular impressions, and not feel either the unity of the grand design, or the height and solidness of the structure, until the door has been closed upon the labyrinth of aisles and shrines, and you survey it from a distance, but still within its shadow.

And yet as, with whatever admiration his friends could not but regard him constantly when among them, the prevailing feeling was still love and affection, so is it now, and so must ever it be, as to his memory. It is not the privilege of every reader to have partaken in the friendship of A GREAT AND GOOD MAN; but those who have not may be assured, that the sentiment, which the near homely contemplation of such a being inspires, is a thing entirely by itself:—

> Not another comfort like to this
> Succeeds in unknown fate.

And now to conclude.—In the year 1832, France and Germany, as well as Britain, had to mourn over their brightest intellects. Goethe shortly preceded Scott, and Cuvier followed him: and with these mighty lights were extinguished many others of no common order—among the rest, Crabbe and Mackintosh.

Many of those who had been intimately connected with Scott in various ways soon also followed him. James Ballantyne was already on his deathbed when he heard of his great friend and patron's death. The foreman of the printing-house—a decent and faithful man, who had known all their secrets, and done his best for their service, both in prosperous and adverse times, by name M'Corkindale—began to droop and pine, and died too in a few months. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, must also be mentioned. He died on the 21st of November 1835; but it had been better for his fame had his end been of earlier date, for he did not follow his best benefactor until he had insulted his dust. Lastly, I observe, as this sheet is passing through the press, the death of the Rev. George Thomson—the happy 'Dominie Thomson' of the happy days of Abbotsford. He died at Edinburgh on the 8th of January 1838.

Miss Anne Scott received at Christmas 1832, a grant of £200 per annum from the privy purse of King William IV. But her name did not long burden the pension list. Her constitution had been miserably shattered in the course of her long and painful attendance, first on her mother's illness, and then on her father's; and perhaps reverse of fortune, and disappointments of various sorts connected with that, had also heavy effect. From the day of Sir Walter's death, the strong stimulus of duty being lost, she too often looked and spoke like one

> Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

After a brief interval of disordered health, she contracted a brain fever which carried her off abruptly. She died in my house in the Regent's Park on the 25th June 1833, and her remains are placed in the New Cemetery in the Harrow Road.

The adjoining grave holds those of her nephew John Hugh Lockhart, who died 15th December 1831; and also those of my wife Sophia, who expired after a long illness, which she bore with all possible meekness and fortitude, on the 17th of May 1837. The clergyman who read the funeral service over her was her father's friend, and hers, and mine, the Rev. Henry Hart Milman, one of the Prebendaries of Westminster; and a little incident which he happened to observe during the prayers suggested to him some verses, which he transmitted to me the morning after, and which the reader will not, I believe, consider altogether misplaced in the last page of these memoirs of her father.

STANZAS

May 22, 1837

Over that solemn pageant mute and dark,
Where in the grave we laid to rest
Heaven's latest, not least welcome guest,
What didst thou on the wing, thou jocund lark!
Hovering in unrebuked glee,
And carolling above that mournful company?

O thou light-loving and melodious bird,
At every sad and solemn fall
Of mine own voice, each interval
In the soul-elevating prayer, I heard
Thy quivering descant full and clear—
Discord not inharmonious to the ear!

We laid her there, the Minstrel's darling child.
Seem'd it then meet that, borne away
From the close city's dubious day,
Her dirge should be thy native woodnote wild;
Nurs'd upon nature's lap, her sleep
Should be where birds may sing, and dewy flowerets weep?

Ascendedst thou, air-wandering messenger!
Above us slowly lingering yet,
To bear our deep, our mute regret;
To waft upon thy faithful wing to her
The husband's fondest last farewell,
Love's final parting pang, the unspoke, the unspeakable?

Or didst thou rather chide with thy blithe voice
  Our selfish grief that would delay
  Her passage to a brighter day ;
Bidding us mourn no longer, but rejoice
  That it hath heavenward flown like thee,
That spirit from this cold world of sin and sorrow free ?

I watched thee, lessening, lessening to the sight,
  Still faint and fainter winnowing
  The sunshine with thy dwindling wing,
A speck, a movement in the ruffled light,
  Till thou wert melted in the sky,
An undistinguished part of the bright infinity.

Meet emblem of that lightsome spirit thou !
  That still, wherever it might come,
  Shed sunshine o'er that happy home,
Her task of kindliness and gladness now
  Absolved with the element above
Hath mingled, and become pure light, pure joy, pure love.

There remain, therefore, of Sir Walter's race, only his two sons,—Walter, his successor in the baronetcy, Lieutenant-Colonel in the 15th Regiment of Hussars—and Charles, a clerk in the office of her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign affairs ;—with two children left by their sister Sophia, a boy and a girl.

Shortly after Sir Walter's death, his sons and myself, as his executors, endeavoured to make such arrangements as were within our power for completing the great object of his own wishes and fatal exertions. We found the remaining principal sum of the Ballantyne debt to be about £54,000. £22,000 had been insured upon his life ; there were some monies in the hands of the Trustees, and Mr. Cadell very handsomely offered to advance to us the balance, about £30,000, that we might without further delay settle with the body of creditors. This was effected accordingly on the 2nd of February 1833 ; Mr. Cadell accepting as his only security the right to the profits accruing from Sir Walter's copyright property and literary remains, until such time as this new and consolidated obligation should be discharged. I am afraid, however, notwithstanding the undiminished sale of his works, especially of his Novels, his executors can hardly hope to witness that consummation, unless, indeed, it should please the Legislature to give some extension to the period for which literary property has hitherto been protected; a bill for which purpose has been repeatedly brought before the House of Commons by Mr. Sergeant Talfourd.

Besides his commercial debt, Sir Walter left also one of £10,000, contracted by himself as an individual, when struggling to support Constable in December 1825, and secured by mortgage on the lands of Abbotsford. And, lastly, the library and museum, presented to him in free gift by his creditors in December 1830, were bequeathed to his eldest son, with a burden to the extent of £5000, which sum he designed to be divided between his younger children, as already explained in an extract from his Diary. His will provided that the produce of his literary property, in case of its proving sufficient to wipe out the remaining debt of Messrs. Ballantyne, should then be applied to the extinction of these mortgages; and thereafter, should this also be accomplished, divided equally among his surviving family.

Various meetings were held soon after his death with a view to the erection of monuments to his memory, and the records of these meetings, and their results, are adorned by many of the noblest and most distinguished names both of England and of Scotland. In London, the Lord Bishop of Exeter, Sir Robert Peel, and Sir John Malcolm, took a prominent part as speakers: in Edinburgh, the Duke of Buccleuch, the Marquis of Lothian, the Earl of Dalhousie, the Earl of Rosebery, Lord Jeffrey (then Lord Advocate for Scotland), and Professor Wilson.

In Glasgow the subscription amounted to about £1200—and a very handsome pillar, surmounted with a statue, has been erected in the chief square of that city, which had been previously adorned with statues of its own most illustrious citizens, Sir John Moore and James Watt.

The subscription for a monument at Edinburgh reached the sum of £6000;—and I believe a rich Gothic cross, with a statue in the interior, will soon be completed.

In the market-place of Selkirk there has been set up, at the cost of local friends and neighbours, a statue in freestone, by Mr. Alexander S. Ritchie of Musselburgh, with this inscription:—

ERECTED IN AUGUST 1839,
IN PROUD AND AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BARONET,
SHERIFF OF THIS COUNTY
FROM 1800 TO 1832.

By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my withered cheek.

The English subscription amounted to somewhere about £10,000; but a part of this was embezzled by a young person rashly appointed to the post of secretary, who carried it with him to America, where he soon afterwards died.

The noblemen and gentlemen who subscribed to this English fund had adopted a suggestion—(which originated, I believe, with Lord Francis Egerton and the Honourable John Stuart Wortley)—that, in place of erecting a cenotaph in Westminster Abbey, or a statue or pillar elsewhere, the most suitable and respectful tribute that could be paid to Sir Walter's memory would be to discharge all the incumbrances upon Abbotsford, and entail the House, with its library and other articles of curiosity collected by him, together with the lands which he had planted and embellished, upon the heirs of his name for ever. The sum produced by the subscription, however, proved inadequate to the realization of such a scheme; and after much consultation, it was at length settled that the money in the hands of the committee (between £7000 and

£8000) should be employed to liquidate the debt upon the library and museum, and whatever is over, towards the mortgage on the lands. This arrangement has enabled the present Sir Walter Scott to secure, in the shape originally desired, the permanent preservation at least of the house and its immediate appurtenances, as a memorial of the tastes and habits of the founder. The poet's ambition to endow a family sleeps with him. But I still hope his successors may be, as long as any of his blood remains, the honoured guardians of that monument.

The most successful portraitures of Sir Walter Scott have been mentioned incidentally in the course of these Memoirs. It has been suggested that a complete list of the authentic likenesses ought to have been given; but the Editor regrets to say that this is not in his power. He has reason to believe that several exist which he has never seen. The following catalogue, however, includes some not previously spoken of.

I. A very good miniature of Sir Walter, done at Bath, when he was in the fifth or sixth year of his age, was given by him to his daughter Sophia, and is now in my possession—the artist's name unknown. The child appears with long flowing hair, the colour a light chestnut—a deep open collar, and scarlet dress. It is nearly a profile; the outline wonderfully like what it was to the last; the expression of the eyes and mouth very striking—grave and pensive.

II. The miniature sent by Scott to Miss Carpenter, shortly before their marriage in 1797 (see vol. i. p. 243), is in the possession of the present Sir Walter. It is not a good work of art, and I know not who executed it. The hair is slightly powdered.

III. The first oil painting, done for Lady Scott in 1805, by Saxon, was, in consequence of repeated applications for the purpose of being engraved, transferred by her to Messrs. Longman & Co., and is now in their house in Paternoster Row. This is a very fine picture, representing, I have no doubt, most faithfully, the author of the Lay of the Last Minstrel. Length, three-quarters—dress, black—hair, nut-brown—the favourite bull-terrier Camp leaning his head on the knee of his master. The companion portrait of Lady Scott is at Abbotsford.

IV. The first picture by Raeburn was done in 1808 for Constable, and passed, at the sale of his effects, into the hands of the Duke of Buccleuch. Scott is represented at full length, sitting by a ruined wall, with Camp at his feet—Hermitage Castle and the mountains of Liddesdale in the background. This noble portrait has been repeatedly engraved: it forms the frontispiece to the fourth of these volumes.[1] Dress black—Hessian boots.

V. The second full length by Raeburn (done a year later) is nearly a repetition of the former; but the painter had some new sittings for it. Two greyhounds (Douglas and Percy) appear in addition to Camp, and the background gives the valley of the Yarrow, marking the period of Ashestiel and Marmion. This piece is at Abbotsford.

VI. A head in oils by Thomas Phillips, R.A., done in 1818 for Mr. Murray, and now in Albemarle Street. The costume was, I think, unfortunately selected—a tartan plaid and open collar. This gives a theatrical air to what would otherwise have been a very graceful representation of Scott in the 47th year of his age. Mr. Phillips (for whom Scott had a warm regard, and who often visited him at Abbotsford) has caught a true expression not hit upon by any of his brethren—a smile of gentle enthusiasm. The head has a vivid resemblance to Sir Walter's eldest daughter, and also to his grandson John Hugh Lockhart. A copy of this picture was added by the late Earl Whitworth to the collection at Knowle.

VII. A head sketched in oil by Geddes—being one of his studies for a picture of the finding of the Scottish Regalia in 1818—is in the possession of Sir James Stewart of Allanbank, Baronet. It is nearly a profile—boldly drawn.

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[1] *i.e.* in the seven volume edition of 1839.

VIII. The unrivalled portrait (three-quarters) by Sir Thomas Lawrence, painted for King George IV. in 1820, and now in the Corridor at Windsor Castle. See vol. iii. p. 371. The engraving, by Robinson, is masterly.

IX. A head by Sir Henry Raeburn—the last work of his hand—was done in 1822 for Lord Montagu, and is at Ditton Park: a massive strong likeness, heavy at first sight, but which grows into favour upon better acquaintance—the eyes very deep and fine. This picture has been well engraved in mezzotinto.

X. A small three-quarters, in oil, done at Chiefswood, in August 1824, by the late Gilbert Stewart Newton, R.A., and presented by him to Mrs. Lockhart. This pleasing picture gives Sir Walter in his usual country dress—a green jacket and black neckcloth, with a leathern belt for carrying the forester's axe round the shoulders. It is the best domestic portrait ever done. A duplicate, in Mr. Murray's possession, was engraved for Finden's 'Illustrations of Byron.'

XI. A half-length, painted by C. R. Leslie, R.A., in 1824, for Mr. Ticknor of Boston, New England, is now in that gentleman's possession. I never saw this picture in its finished state, but the beginning promised well, and I am assured it is worthy of the artist's high reputation. It has not been engraved—in this country I mean—but a reduced copy of it furnished an indifferent print for one of the Annuals.

XII. A small head was painted in 1826 by Mr. Knight, a young artist, patronised by Terry. See vol. iv. p. 406. This juvenile production, ill-drawn and feeble in expression, was engraved for Mr. Lodge's great work!

XIII. A half-length by Mr. Colvin Smith of Edinburgh, done in January 1828, for the artist's uncle, Lord Gillies. I never admired this picture; but it pleased many, perhaps better judges. Mr. Smith executed no less than fifteen copies for friends of Sir Walter; among others, the Lord Bishop of Llandaff, the Lord Chief-Commissioner Adam, and John Hope, Esq., Dean of the Faculty of Advocates.

XIV. A half-length done by Mr. John Graham in 1829, for the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in whose chambers it now is: Not destitute of merit; but much inferior to that of Miss Anne Scott, by the same hand, in the drawing-room at Abbotsford.

XV. An excellent half-length portrait, by John Watson Gordon of Edinburgh, done in March 1830, for Mr. Cadell. See this volume, p. 325. Scott is represented sitting, with both hands resting on his staff—the stag-hound Bran on his left. The engraving in vol. xxxiii. of the Waverley Novels does no justice to this picture.

XVI. The cabinet picture, with armour and stag-hounds, done by Francis Grant, for Lady Ruthven, in 1831. See this volume, p. 318. This interesting piece has never been engraved.

XVII. I am sorry to say that I cannot express much approbation of the representation of Sir Walter, introduced by Sir David Wilkie in his picture of 'The Abbotsford Family'; nor indeed are any of the likenesses in that beautiful piece (1817) at all satisfactory to me, except only that of Sir Adam Fergusson, which is perfect. This is at Huntly Burn.

XVIII. XIX. XX. Nor can I speak more favourably either of the head of Scott, in Wilkie's 'Arrival of George IV. at Holyrood' (1822), or of that in William Allan's picture of 'The Ettrick Shepherd's Househeating' (1819). Allan has succeeded better in his figure of 'The Author of Waverley in his Study'; this was done shortly before Sir Walter's death.

XXI. Mr. Edwin Landseer, R.A., has recently painted a full-length portrait, with the scenery of the Rhymer's Glen; and his familiarity with Scott renders this almost as valuable as if he had sat for it. This beautiful picture is in the gallery of Mr. Wells.

Two or three drawings were done at Naples; but the friends who requested Sir Walter to sit, when labouring under paralysis, were surely forgetful of what was due to him and to themselves ; and, judging by the lithographed prints, the results were in every point of view utterly worthless.

I have already (vol. ii. p. 21) given better evidence than my own as to the inimitable bust done by Sir Francis Chantrey in 1820, and now in the library at Abbotsford. Previous to Sir Walter's death, the niche which this now occupies held a cast of the monumental effigy of Shakspeare, presented to him by George Bullock, with an elegant stand, having the letters W. S. in large relievo on its front. Anxiety to place the precious marble in the safest station induced the poet's son to make the existing arrangement the day after his father's funeral. The propriety of the position is obvious ; but in case of misrepresentation hereafter, it is proper to mention that it was not chosen by Sir Walter for an image of himself.

Sir Francis Chantrey sculptured, in 1828, a bust possessing the character of a second original. This is now, I am rejoiced to say, in the gallery of Sir Robert Peel at Drayton ; and the following letter supplies the most authentic history of its execution :—

'*To the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., Whitehall.*

'Belgrave Place, 26*th January* 1838.

'Dear Sir Robert—I have much pleasure in complying with your request to note down such facts as remain on my memory concerning the bust of Sir Walter Scott which you have done me the honour to place in your collection at Drayton Manor.

'My admiration of Scott, as a poet and a man, induced me, in the year 1820, to ask him to sit to me for his bust—the only time I ever recollect having asked a similar favour from any one. He agreed ; and I stipulated that he should breakfast with me always before his sittings—and never come alone, nor bring more than three friends at once, and that they should all be good talkers. That he fulfilled the latter condition you may guess, when I tell you, that on one occasion he came with Mr. Croker, Mr. Heber, and the late Lord Lyttleton. The marble bust produced from these sittings was moulded; and about forty-five casts were disposed of among the poet's most ardent admirers. This was all I had to do with plaster casts. The Bust was pirated by Italians; and England and Scotland, and even the Colonies, were supplied with unpermitted and bad casts to the extent of thousands—in spite of the terror of an Act of Parliament.

'I made a copy in marble from this Bust for the Duke of Wellington; it was sent to Apsley House in 1827, and it is the only duplicate of my Bust of Sir Walter that I ever executed in marble.

'I now come to your Bust of Scott. In the year 1828 I proposed to the poet to present the original marble as an Heir-Loom to Abbotsford, on condition that he would allow me sittings sufficient to finish another marble from the life for my own studio. To this proposal he acceded; and the Bust was sent to Abbotsford accordingly, with the following words inscribed on the back:—"This Bust of Sir Walter Scott was made in 1820 by Francis Chantrey, and presented by the sculptor to the poet, as a token of esteem, in 1828."

'In the months of May and June in the same year, 1828, Sir Walter fulfilled his promise; and I finished, from his face, the marble bust now at Drayton Manor—a better sanctuary than my studio—else I had not parted with it. The expression is more serious than in the two former Busts, and the marks of age *more* than eight years deeper.

'I have now, I think, stated all that is worthy of remembering about the Bust, except that there need be no fear of piracy, for it has never been moulded.—I have the honour to be, dear sir, your very sincere and faithful servant, F. CHANTREY.'

Sir Walter's good-nature induced him to sit, at various periods of his life, to other sculptors of inferior standing and reputation. I am not aware, however, that any of their performances but two ever reached the dignity of marble. The one of these, a very tolerable work, was done by Mr. Joseph about 1822, and is in the gallery of Mr. Burn Callander, at Prestonhall, near Edinburgh. The other was modelled by Mr. Lawrence Macdonald, in the unhappy winter of 1830. The period of the artist's observation would alone have been sufficient to render his efforts fruitless. His Bust may be, in point of execution, good ; but he does not seem to me to have produced what any friend of Sir Walter's will recognise as a likeness.

The only statue executed during Sir Walter's lifetime is that by John Greenshields in freestone. This, considering all the circumstances (see vol. v. p. 229), is certainly a most meritorious work ; and I am well pleased to find that it has its station in Mr. Cadell's premises in St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh, under the same roof with the greater part of the original MSS. of Sir Walter's Poems and Romances. The proprietor has adopted the inscription for Bacon's effigy at St. Alban's, and carved on the pedestal SIC SEDEBAT.

ADDENDA

FROM LOCKHART'S ABRIDGED EDITION

P. 289, note 1. The new note records the death of Nicholson at Kelso in 1841, and the last words as to Mrs. Street's husband are altered from 'Mr. Griffiths, a respectable brewer at Walworth,' to 'Mr. Griffiths, a respectable farmer at Ealing.'

P. 451. After the account of the death of Mr. Thomson, the Abridgment continues: 'William Laidlaw, after 1832, had the care first of the Seaforth, and then of the Balnagowan estates, in Ross-shire, as factor: but being struck with paralysis in August 1844, retired to the farmhouse of his excellent brother James at Contin, and died there in May 1845. Mr. Morritt, to whom the larger Memoirs of his friend were inscribed, died at Rokeby on the 12th of July 1843: loved, venerated, never to be forgotten. William Clerk of Eldin, admired through life for talents and learning, of which he has left no monument, died at Edinburgh in January 1847.

'But why extend this catalogue? Sixteen years have passed—the generation to which Scott belonged have been gathered to their fathers. Of his own children none now survive. Miss Anne Scott . . . died in my house in the Regent's Park on the 25th June 1833, and her remains are placed in the New Cemetery in the Harrow Road. The adjoining grave holds those of her nephew John Hugh Lockhart, who died 15th December 1831; and also those of my wife Sophia, who expired after a long illness, which she bore with all possible meekness and fortitude, on the 17th of May 1837. Of all the race she most resembled her father in countenance, in temper, and in manners.

'Charles Scott, whose spotless worth had tenderly endeared him to the few who knew him intimately, and whose industry and accuracy were warmly acknowledged by his professional superiors, on Lord Berwick's recall from the Neapolitan embassy resumed his duties as a clerk in the Foreign Office, and continued in that situation until the summer of 1841. Sir John M'Neill, G.C.B., being then entrusted with a special mission to the Court of Persia, carried Charles with him as attaché and private secretary; but the journey on horseback through Asia Minor was trying for his never robust frame; and he contracted an inflammatory disorder, which cut him off at Teheran, almost immediately on his arrival there—October 28, 1841. He had reached his thirty-sixth year. His last hours had every help that kindness and skill could yield, for the Ambassador had for him the affection of an elder brother, and the physician, Dr. George Joseph Bell (now also gone), had been his schoolfellow, and through life his friend. His funeral in that remote place was so attended as to mark the world-wide reputation of his father. By Sir John M'Neill's care a small monument with a suitable inscription was erected over his untimely grave. Walter, who succeeded to the baronetcy, proceeded to Madras in 1839 as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 15th Hussars; and subsequently commanded that regiment. He was beloved and esteemed in it by officers and men as much, I believe, as any gentleman ever was in any corps of the British army; and there was no officer of his rank who stood higher in the opinion of the heads of his profession. He had begun life with many advantages—a very handsome person and great muscular strength, a sweet and even temper, and talents which, in the son of any father but his, would have been considered brilliant. His answers, when examined as a witness before a celebrated court-martial in Ireland in 1834, were indeed universally admired. Whoever had known his father recognised the head and the heart, and in his letters from India, especially his descriptions of scenery and sport, there occur many passages which, for picturesque effect and easy playful humour, would have done no discredit even to his father's pen. Though neglectful of extra-professional studies in his earlier days he had in after-life read extensively, and made himself, in every sense of the term, an accomplished man. The library for the soldiers of his corps was founded by him; the care of it was a principal occupation of his later years. His only legacy out of his family was one of £100 to this library; and his widow, well understanding what he felt towards it, directed that a similar sum should be added in her own name. Sir Walter having unwisely exposed himself in a tiger-hunt in August 1846, was, on his return to his quarters at Bangalore, smitten with fever, which ended in liver disease. He was ordered to proceed to England, and died near the Cape of Good Hope on board the ship *Wellesley*, February the 8th, 1847. Lady Scott conveyed his remains to this country, and they were interred in the paternal aisle at Dryburgh on the 4th of May following, in the presence of the few survivors of his father's friends and many of his own. Three officers who had served under him, and were accidentally in Britain, arrived from great distances to pay him the last homage of their respect. He had never had any child; and with him the baronetcy expired.

'The children of illustrious men begin the world with great advantages, if they know how to use them; but this is hard and rare. There is risk that in the flush of youth, favourable to all illusions, the filial pride may be twisted to personal vanity. When experience checks this misgrowth, it is apt to do so with a severity that shall reach the best sources of moral and intellectual development. The great sons of great fathers have been few. It is usual to see their progeny smiled at through life for stilted pretension, or despised, at best pitied, for an inactive, inglorious humility. The shadow of the oak is broad, but noble plants seldom rise within that circle. It was fortunate for the sons of Scott that his day darkened in the morning of theirs. The sudden calamity anticipated the natural effect of observation and the collisions of society and business. All weak, unmanly folly was nipped in the bud, and soon withered to the root. They were both remarkably modest men, but in neither had the better stimulus of the blood been arrested. In aspect and manners they were unlike each other; the elder tall and athletic, the model of a cavalier, with a generous frankness; the other slender and delicate of frame, in bearing, of a womanly gentleness and reserve; but in heart and mind none more akin. The affection of all the family, but especially perhaps of the brothers, for each other, kept to the end all the warmth of undivided childhood. When Charles died and Walter knew that he was left alone of all his father's house, he evidently began to droop in spirit. It appeared to me from his letters that he thenceforth dreaded rather than desired a return to Scotland and Abbotsford. His only anxiety was that his regiment might be marched towards the Punjaub.

'The only descendants of the Poet now alive are my son, Walter Scott Lockhart (a lieutenant in the army), who, as his uncle's heir of entail, has lately received permission to assume the additional surname of Scott; and his sister, Charlotte Harriet Jane, married in August 1847 to James Robert Hope, Barrister, second son of the late General the Honourable Sir Alexander Hope, G.C.B.'

P. 456. *A memorial of the tastes and habits of the founder:* on this in the Abridgment follows a fresh paragraph: 'Such was the state of matters when the Lieutenant-Colonel embarked for India, and in his absence no further steps could well be taken. Upon his death it was found that, notwithstanding the very extensive demand for his father's writings, there still remained a considerable debt to Mr. Cadell, and also the greater part of the old debt secured on the lands. Mr. Cadell then offered to relieve the guardians of the young inheritor of that great name from much anxiety and embarrassment, by accepting in full payment of the sum due to himself, and also in recompense for his taking on himself the final obliteration of the heritable bond, a transference to him of the remaining claims of the family over Sir Walter's writings, together with the result of some literary exertions of the only surviving executor. This arrangement was completed in May 1847, and the estate, as well as the house and its appendages, became at last unfettered. The rental is small, but I hope and trust that as long as any of the blood remains reverent care will attend over the guardianship of a possession associated with so many high and noble recollections. On that subject the gallant soldier who executed the entail expressed also in his testament feelings of the devoutest anxiety: and it was, I am well assured, in order that no extraneous obstacle might thwart the fulfilment of his pious wishes, that Mr. Cadell crowned a long series of kind services to the cause and the memory of Sir Walter Scott, by the very handsome proposition of 1847.'

P. 455. After the description of the Selkirk monument, the Abridgment has this paragraph : 'In what manner to cover the grave itself at Dryburgh required some consideration, in consequence of the state of the surrounding and overhanging ruins. Sir F. Chantrey recommended a block of Aberdeen granite, so solid as to resist even the fall of the ivied roof of the aisle, and kindly sketched the shape, in which he followed the stone coffin of the monastic ages, especially the "marble stone" on which Deloraine awaits the opening of the wizard's vault in the Lay. This drawing had just been given to Allan Cunningham, when our great sculptor was smitten with a fatal apoplexy. As soon as pressing business allowed, "honest Allan" took up the instruction of his dying friend; the model was executed under his eye, and the letter in which he reported its completion was, I am informed, the very last that he penned. He also had within a few hours a paralytic seizure, from which he never rose. The inscriptions on this simple but graceful tomb are merely of name and date.'

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE PUBLICATIONS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

*** *For miscellaneous references to these Works in the preceding volumes see the accompanying Index. This List is by no means presentea as a complete one.*

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Captain George Carleton's Memoirs. 8vo	11
Sir Robert Cary, Earl of Monmouth's Memoirs. 8vo	11

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Review of Sir John Carr's Tour in Scotland	79
Sir Ralph Sadler's Life, Letters, and State Papers. 3 vols. 4to	87

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